THE Mennonite Quarterly Review

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EDITORIAL

A MOST FREQUENTLY REPEATED CRITICISM OF THE MENNONITE MOVEMENT IS THAT IT HAS produced an excessive number of divisions. In its common form this criticism is not justifiable. In the first place, a number of the present Mennonite branches in America are strictly speaking not schisms at all, but are the result of immigration at various times and from various European backgrounds, of Mennonite groups which failed to amalgamate in the new world. In the second place, it is certainly not true that Mennonites have suffered more schisms than other religious bodies. Even a casual examination of the government religious census reports will correct such an impression, and large numbers of schisms in some of the larger denominations are not revealed in the government reports. For instance, the original Methodist movement has suffered more than fifty schisms over the question of the episcopacy, of strict or lax discipline, and the degree of spiritual "fire." The chief failure of Mennonites on this point has been the failure to heal schisms after they have occurred. Sometimes divisions continue in existence long after the original cause has faded into the dim past of history.

The chief unhealed schism in the history of the Mennonite movement is the Amish division. Even here, splendid progress toward reunion has been made. In America at least half of all the Amish have been reunited with the Mennonite body since 1915, the year in which the first official merger of Amish and Mennonite conferences occurred in Indiana. Already the younger generation in the merged conferences has forgotten the division, and thinks of itself only as "Mennonite." However, the Amish group still exists in America in two organized conferences, The Conservative A. M. and the Ontario A. M., and a large unorganized group of so-called "Old Order Amish." This larger group represents the original tradition of the Amish branch, but is no longer completely unified, exhibiting more or less significant divisions in various communities.

The history of the Amish division and of the development of the Amish movement to the present time has not been written in a thorough and exhaustive manner. The writing of this history remains one of the most urgent tasks of Mennonite historiography. True, every book on Mennonite history pays some attention to the Amish, and Dr. C. Henry Smith has done more than any other modern historian to clear away the mystery surrounding the origin of this branch of the great Mennonite family, particularly in his articles in the *Christian Exponent* in 1924. And, no doubt, the somewhat "picturesque" "Old Order Amishman" has been exploited in magazine articles without end, chiefly for his "picturesqueness." But the time is here when a systematic and sympathetic account of the Amish from 1693 to the present day should be written.

Milton Gascho's painstaking and thorough study of the causes of the division in Switzerland in 1693, which the REVIEW is happy to present in this number, is the first major contribution toward this end. Originally written as a term paper in a Senior class in Mennonite History at Goshen College under the direction of Professor H. S. Bender, it was expanded to its present form by additional study after Gascho graduated from college. The paper is based exclusively on first-hand sources. These sources consist of sixteen contemporary documents, chiefly letters by the participants in the controversy. The documents have been combed most painstakingly for every pertinent scrap of information bearing on the subject, and a valuable monograph has been the result. Gascho shows beyond a shadow of a doubt that the chief issue in the controversy was that of strictness in discipline, the issue, by the way, which has been the primary cause of most Mennonite divisions. But he shows also that the reason why this issue was driven to the point of a division was the personality of Jacob Ammann, apparently a young bishop, aggressive and able in his leadership. How often this story has been repeated in the history of the Christian church,—a point of difference, concerning which there could be legitimate divergence of opinion, not serious enough to be a major issue, but driven to become the cause for a schism by the ruthlessness of a strong leader. At any rate, "hooks and eyes and beards" were not the original causes of the division however large a part they may have played since that time in keeping Amish and Mennonites apart.

WE CONCLUDE IN THIS ISSUE DR. CORRELL'S VALUABLE COLLECTION OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS bearing on the history of the immigration of Mennonites from Russia to Manitoba, which was begun in the last issue. The editorial which accompanied the first instalment gives the setting and significance of Dr. Correll's discoveries. It might be mentioned

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THE AMISH DIVISION OF 1693–1697 IN SWITZERLAND AND ALSACE

MILTON GASCHO

Introduction

The Mennonite Church in the United States and Canada exists in several branches today. One of the largest of these is the Amish group. In some places the name Amish is no longer used to designate the group, but there are others where the Amish are still distinct from the other Mennonite branches. This division was brought to America from the land of its origin, and is as C. Henry Smith says "one of the first and most far-reaching of the divisions to which the Mennonite Church has been subjected during the course of its history."[1] The fact that the division still exists two and a quarter centuries after the original controversy is an example of what may take place and of how far-reaching the results may be when a few people begin to dispute on religious questions or interpretation of Scripture.

How this division took place can be best understood by studying the letters and documents written at the time of the controversy. Whether any of the original letters are still extant is not known. However, copies of a number of them are in existence. C. Henry Smith says,

1. C. Henry Smith, "Some Old Letters," *The Christian Exponent,* Apr. 11, 1924, Vol. 1 No. 8.

> "Some of these letters were circulated widely among both sides in Switzerland and Alsace and being frequently copied have thus been preserved by various individuals to the present day. Quite a complete list is found in the possession of certain members of the Mennonite congregation in the Emmenthal, Canton Bern, Switzerland. It was from this set that Ernst Mueller secured his information for his chapter in his history of the Bern Mennonites on the Amish division. Copies of many of the letters were also brought to Pennsylvania in the early part of the eighteenth century; and were copied occasionally by such of their descendants as were interested in the history of their church."[2]

Smith also says, "The Illinois Amish who came from Alsace also brought some of these copies with them," and tells about a collection in the possession of the Swiss Mennonite congregation at Bluffton, Ohio.[3] Several collections have also been printed. A collection belonging to a member of the Amish group by the name of Christian Brenneman was published in 1871 by Bishop Joseph Stucky of Illinois under the title, *Eine Begebenheit die sich in Deutschland und in der Schweiz von* 1693 *bis* 1700 *zugetragen hat.* The fourth edition of this pamphlet was published in 1936 by L. A. Miller of Arthur, Illinois. This edition contains a heretofore unprinted letter by Jakob Ammann in addition to material printed in the previous editions. The second edition was printed sometime between 1871 and 1906, while the third edition appeared in 1906. Another collection by Johannes S. Steiner of Bluffton, Ohio, was printed in 1876 in *Eine Verantwortung gegen Daniel Musser's Meidungs-Erklärung, welche er gemacht hat in seinem Buch, betitelt: "Reformirte Mennoniten"* by Johannes Moser of Bluffton, Ohio. The letters and documents printed in this pamphlet are used by the author in his argument against the doctrine of avoidance or shunning as Musser taught it and as the Amish practiced it. A collection was also printed in Germany in *Der Christliche Gemeinde Kalender* of 1908, 1909, and 1915. The editor of or contributor to the *Gemeinde Kalender* obtained these documents from a collection of manuscripts (about 90 pages in all) that were in the possession of one Peter Kipfer of Raingut, in the Emmenthal, Switzerland.[4] This may be

2. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
4. "Geschichtliche Beiträge aus den Mennoniten Gemeinden" in *Chrichtlicher Gemeinde Kalender,* Kaiserslautern, Germany, 1908, p. 136.

the collection to which C. Henry Smith referred as being in the possession of certain members of the Emmenthal congregation.[5] It is largely upon these three printed collections that the study of the Amish division as herewith presented is based.

I

The Letters and Documents

The old letters and documents printed in *Der Christliche Gemeinde Kalender* are perhaps more accurate and more like the originals than those in the other collections, since they are written in the Swiss German, and perhaps date back as far as the second half of the eighteenth century.[6] However the text of the letters that the other two collections (Stucky and Steiner) have in common with the Kipfer collection is very nearly the same and considering the fact that they were perhaps copied more times, one must admire the painstaking efforts of those who copied them.

All three of the collections have a number of documents in common; some of the documents are found in two of the collections; and a few are found only in one. Incidentally every letter or document that is printed in more than one of the collections is contained in the Gemeinde Kalender collection, and was printed in the United States in the High German before being published in Germany in translation from the original Swiss German.[7]

For convenience in comparing sources the following list of documents is prepared. In a few cases the titles used are not found in the collections but are assigned by the present writer as a means of identification. The order follows rather closely the order in which the documents appear in the *Gemeinde Kalender.*

THE CHRISTIAN BLANK LETTER is found in the three collections: *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), pp. 138-142; *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 10-17, (1936), pp. 13-20; *Verantwortung,* pp. 23-25. It is not altogether complete in *Verantwortung.*[8] This letter is important because it gives us one of the

5. See note 2 above.

6. "Geschichtliche Beiträge aus den Mennoniten Gemeinden," in *Christlicher Gemeinde Kalender,* 1908, p. 136. "Das Heft selbst dürfte aus der zweiten Hälfte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts stammen, Es ist jedenfalls erste oder gar vielleicht schon zweite Abschrift von Original-Aufzeichnungen aus dem Ende des siebzehnten Jahrhunderts."

7. It must be remembered that *Verantwortung* was published in 1876 and *Begebenheit* was in its third edition in 1906, while the first of the letters appeared in *Gemeinde Kalender* in 1908.

8. The letter as printed in *Verantwortung* begins where in *Begebenheit,* (1906), p. 10, (1936), p. 13, and in *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), p. 138 it continues with, "Erst-

eye-witness accounts of the events of the division. The purpose of the letter, as stated by its author, is to show that "Meidung" and footwashing were not the causes of the division.[9] The letter traces the movements of the author and Jakob Ammann and tells of the events. The author seems to let the reader draw his own conclusions as to what were the causes, but he does not disprove the fact that "Meidung" was one of the main issues in the controversy. He seems to point at the actions of the participants as perhaps the immediate factors causing the trouble. Christian Blank is said to be the author of the letter.[10] Joseph Stucky in *Begebenheit* says that the letter was written about the year 1693,[11] but he must have been mistaken, for Blank was still on the Amish side on Jan. 7, 1700 and one can easily tell by the tone of the letter that he was no longer in favor of the Amish side.[12] Near the end of his letter he mentions one Hans Güngerich who, together with some others who were also under the ban, was being considered for reinstatement into church fellowship. This was advised against by the Swiss ministers and others. The persons considering the reinstatement acted contrary to this advice and Uli Ammann and Hans Gerber are named as having been accepted into church fellowship.[13] Another letter, dated Feb. 26, 1711, asks advice as to whether Hans Güngerich, Uli Ammann and others should be accepted into fellowship.[14] If both these letters refer to the same event, the Christian Blank letter could not have been written much before the latter part of February, 1711.

2. The Peter Giger Letter is found in the *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), pp. 138-145, and in *Verantwortung,* pp. 25-27. It is another eye-witness letter and is written by one of the men whom Jakob Ammann placed under the ban. It tells of more of the happenings than any other letter and was probably intended to be a record of the division. The letter is not dated, but it was probably written in 1693 since it does not mention Jakob Ammann

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lich so hat der Jakob Ammann gesagt, er wolle die Gemeinden in der Schweiz besuchen," and ends where *Begebenheit,* (1906), p. 16, (1936), p. 18, and *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), p. 141 continues with, "Was antrifft etliche Gemeinden in Schweizerland und auch im Elsasz, usw."

9. The term "Meidung" will be used throughout this paper for "Avoidance" or "Shunning" as taught in the Dortrecht Confession of 1632.

10. *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), p. 142; *Begebenheit* (1906), p. 17, (1936), p. 20; *Verantwortung,* p. 23.
None of the copies has the name, "Christian Blank" as a signature, but there is no good reason to doubt his being the author. He is referred to by Peter Giger as having been with Ammann at some of the first discussions in the controversy. See "Peter Giger letter" in *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), pp. 142, 143, or *Verantwortung,* p. 25. Jakob Ammann in a letter dated Nov. 3, 1693, mentions Christian Blank several times as one of his witnesses to the events. See *Begebenheit,* (1936) pp. 59, 63; on page 63 Blank is mentioned twice.

11. *Begebenheit,* (1906), p. 117, (1936), p. 20.

12. *Ibid.,* (1906), pp. 53, 54, (1936), pp. 86, 87; *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), pp. 146, 147; *Verantwortung,* pp. 37, 38.
"Jaggi Amman, Isaac Kauffman und Nikl Augspurger: Wir bekennen, das wir . . . übel darinnen gefehlt haben, denn wir sind bei-einander gewesen an dem 7. Tag Januar 1700 (in *Gemeinde Kalender* "Den 7. Tag Hornung"), und sind vereinigt worden. . . . Auch Ulli Amman und Christian Blank bekennen wie oben steht."

13. *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 16, 17, (1936), p. 19; *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), pp. 141, 142.

14. *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1915), p. 124; *Verantwortung,* p. 38.

as sending out his *Warnungs-Schrift* which in both collections is printed immediately following and is dated 1693.

3. JAKOB AMMANN'S WARNUNGS-SCHRIFT is found in the *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), p. 146, and in *Verantwortung,* p. 27. In the *Gemeinde Kalender* it is printed as a continuation of the *Peter Giger letter,* while in *Verantwortung,* after the close of the Giger letter, it is introduced by, "Nach diesem hat Jacob Amman seine Warnungs-Schrift gesandt, wie folgt:" This letter was to be circulated throughout the membership; and it asked them to appear at certain dates to state how they stood on three questions Ammann was contending about. Those who did not appear were to be placed under the ban. The date is given as 1693 in both collections.

4. A COLLECTION OF CONFESSIONS is found in all three printed collections; in the *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), pp. 146-148; in *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 53-55, (1936), pp. 86-88; and in *Verantwortung,* pp. 37, 39. The first confession is by Jakob Ammann, Niklaus Augspurger, and Isaac Kaufmann, and admits that they had not done right in the way they used the ban. They date their decision February 7, 1700.[15] This confession is then indorsed by Ulrich Amman and Christian Blank. Then Jakob Kleiner, Hans Bachman, Felix Hägi, and Hans Beiri confess that they acted too rashly in placing persons under the ban and declare Kleiner, Hägi, and Bachman to be under the ban. Then follows a confession by Hans Gut from the Palatinate.[16] In his apology he explains how it came about that he had joined with Ammann, he having understood that Ammann had made things right previously. This group of confessions is the only document in the three collections that has no mention of "Meidung."

5. THE LETTER TO HANS REIST is found in the *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), pp. 148-151, and in *Verantwortung,* pp. 34-36. The purpose of the letter is to encourage Hans Reist and to pledge the senders' loyalty to him. It shows a very bitter attitude toward Ammann and the Amish. It was apparently written by Hans Rudi Nägely and was also signed by Christian Plien, Rudolph Huszer, Peter Lehman, and Christoffel Dohllen. It is dated January (Wintermonat) 13, 1697.

6. AN INTRODUCTION TO SOME LETTERS is found in the *Gemeinde Kalender* (1909), p. 134, in *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 5, 6, (1936), pp. 7, 8, and in *Verantwortung,* p. 21. It was written by some one who had a collection of letters written at the time of the controversy and was copying them. The author tells how Ammann excommunicated those who did not believe with him on the question of "Meidung" which he introduced in an attempt to restore the scriptural discipline which he thought had been lost in various ways. He then states that a number of persons wrote to Ammann and his followers in an attempt to clarify their views on "Meidung." But the letter that follows in most of the collections (*Jakob Gut's Meidung Letter*) was not written to Ammann or the Amish, but rather to a congregation where

15. This is the date given in the *Gemeinde Kalender. Begebenheit* gives the date as Jan. 7, 1700, while *Verantwortung* gives the date as February 9, 1700. Since two of the copies agree on the 7th day of the month and two agree on February, we conclude it must have been Feb. 7, 1700.

16. This may have been originally a separate document. It is printed separately in *Verantwortung.*

Ammann had previously made charges against those he excommunicated and to whom Jakob Gut had previously written in defense against those charges.[17] Only one letter in the three collections explaining "Meidung" is written to the Amish party, the one written by Jonas Lohr. The date of this introduction is unknown.

7. Jakob Gut's "Meidung" Letter is printed in the *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1909) pp. 133-136, in *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 6-10, (1936) pp. 8-12, and in *Verantwortung,* pp. 31-33. The purpose of the letter is to explain his understanding of "Meidung." The date of the letter is not given.

8. Hans Rudi Naegeli's "Meidung" Letter, is found in the *Gemeinde Kalender* (1909), pp. 136-138, and in *Verantwortung,* pp. 31-33. The letter is a strong protest against "Meidung" as taught by the Amish and explains the author's views on the subject. It was not written directly to the Amish or Ammann since the author refers to them several times in the third person, in spite of the fact that the editor of the letter in the *Gemeinde Kalender* says, "Also lautet der Brief, welchen Hans Rudi Nägely dem Jakob Ammann und seinem Anhang zugeschrieben hat." The letter is dated May 6, 1694.

9. The Jonas Lohr "Meidung" Letter is found only in *Verantwortung,* pp. 29-31. It is dated August (Herbstmonat) 28, 1695. It is an answer to the letter written by Jakob Ammann on November 22, 1693 and also explains the author's views on "Meidung." It reproves Amman for the conduct of his party. This letter is also referred to by Peter Lehmann and Rudolf Huszer in a letter written December 27, 1697.

10. The Gerhardt Roosen Letter is found in the *Gemeinde Kalender* (1909) pp. 139-141, and in *Begebenheit* (1906) pp. 17-22, (1936) pp. 21-25. It is written in reply to a letter which Gerhardt Roosen, a prominent Mennonite minister in Hamburg who died in 1711 at the age of ninety-nine years and eight and one-half months,[18] had received from Christen Plien (or Plüm), telling about the war with France, and the Amish trouble. His opinions on the issues give us evidence that the question of uniformity in dress had a part in the controversy. The letter is dated December 2, 1697.

11. Jakob Gut's Letter to Peter Lehmann and Rudi Huszer is found in the *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1915) pp. 121-123, and in *Verantwortung,* pp. 33, 34. It advises against a reconciliation with the Amish and tells about the experiences of Mennonite refugees in Holland with the Holland divisions. The letter is dated October 19, 1699 and is signed by Jakob Gut. It is also indorsed by Rudi Huser, Peter Lehmann and other ministers from the Upper Palatinate and Switzerland. The fact that the letter is addressed to Peter Lehmann and Rudi Huser and is also signed by them is a little hard to explain. In *Verantwortung* the names of the persons addressed are spelled a little differently than the names at the end of the letter. This would suggest that there were perhaps two Peter Lehmanns and two Rudi Husers, but that is improbable. The explanation may be that after they had received the letter they added their names with some others as a sign of their agreement with Jakob Gut.

17. See first paragraph of *Jakob Gut's Meidung Letter.*

18. C. H. Smith, *The Mennonites,* Berne, Indiana, 1920, p. 120.

12. A Statement of Reasons why they could not agree with Jakob Ammann, signed by nine Swiss ministers and seven from the Palatinate and dated March 13, 1694, is found in the *Gemeinde Kalender* (1915) pp. 123, 124, and in *Verantwortung,* p. 29.

13. A letter from Hans Bachman and others is found in the *Gemeinde Kalender* (1915) p. 124, and in *Verantwortung,* p. 38. It tells of certain of the Amish who came to the authors seeking a reconciliation, and asks for advice. It is dated February 26, 1711, and is signed by Hans Bachman, Philipp Hägy,[19] Hans Jogli Schneider, Jakob Fretz,[20] Hans Blum, Hans Müller, and Hans Wiri.[21]

14. A letter by Peter Lehmann and Rudolph Huszer is found in *Verantwortung,* pp. 36, 37. It tells of their conversation with Jakob Ammann when he asked to hear the letters they were carrying through Switzerland. It paints a somewhat graphic picture of two sides in a heated argument. It is dated December 27, 1697.

15. A letter by Uli Ammann is found in *Begebenheit* (1936) pp. 26-57, (1906) pp. 22-57. It was written in reply to another letter from which the author gathered that the writer was somewhat uncertain which side was in the right. The author explains the causes of the strife, mentioning three things that were issues, and then tells how the division came about, not in detail, but somewhat apologetically. He also mentions numerous occurrences after the division. After recounting numerous points by which he tries to show that the other side was as much in the wrong as they were, and more so since they wouldn't admit it after the Amish had admitted wrong, he also explains his understanding of "Meidung." The letter is supposedly written in 1698. The author of *Begebenheit* obtained his copy from Christian Brenneman who had copied it in 1869.

16. Jakob Ammann's letter of November 22, 1693 is printed only in the 1936 edition of *Begebenheit,* pp. 58-85. It is a reply to a letter written by ministers in the upper and lower Palatinate October 16, 1693, and received by Ammann November 3, 1693. The purpose of the letter is stated in the words "Wann ihr recht Berichtung wartet." In it Jakob Ammann explains his dealings with Hüsli Hans (Hans Reist) and others and tells why he expelled them from the church. He goes to some length to show that he did nothing without Scriptural grounds and that each act was done by a scriptural method. He explains his understanding of the points on which he disagreed with Hüsli Hans and his group. It is a valuable source for Ammann's ideas on the various questions that had a part in the controversy. In it are found indications of questions not mentioned elsewhere.[22]

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19. *Verantwortung* has instead of Philip Hägy the name Felix Jäg.

20. Jakob Frenti instead of Jakob Fretz in *Verantwortung.*

21. The name Hans Wiri is not found in the *Gemeinde Kalender,* but only in *Verantwortung.*

22. One question mentioned is attendance in the state churches. Another is the shearing of the beard and the style of apparel. The letter occasioning this letter is mentioned in the Jonas Lohr letter and gives advice to the ministers in Alsace not to be led astray by Amman and his "new doctrine." See *Begebenheit* pp. 75, 76 (1936 edition) and also the Jonas Lohr letter.

We know that this list of documents is not complete, since a number of writings are mentioned in the letters that are not found in any of the three printed collections. Whether any of these have been copied and preserved is not known; and it is altogether possible that not more than one copy of some of them ever existed. Some of these letters are only mentioned in the letters we have preserved, while some are quoted from. It may be well to make a list of those we know were written during the controversy and are not sure whether copies of them exist. This list may not be complete since it does not seem probable that every letter written was referred to in some other person's writing. A number of the letters in the three printed collections are not referred to in any of the others. The list follows:

1. A LETTER BY HANS REIST written before Ammann excommunicated him, informing his readers that he would not accept "Meidung" and asking them not to pay too much attention to the "young fellow" Ammann. This letter is mentioned by Uli Ammann in his letter (See *Begebenheit* (1906) p. 25, (1936) p. 29.) and also by Jakob Ammann in his letter of November 22, 1693 (See *Begebenheit* (1936) pp. 60, 61.).

2. A LETTER BY PETER GIGER written before he was excommunicated. Mentioned in Jakob Gut's "Meidung" letter. (See *Gemeinde Kalender* (1909) p. 135, *Begebenheit* (1906) p. 8, (1936) p. 10, and *Verantwortung,* p. 28).

3. A LETTER OR STATEMENT WHICH JAKOB AMMANN read at the meeting where Hans Reist and some others were excommunicated, and in which six charges were listed against Hans Reist. Mentioned in the Peter Giger account of the division. (See *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908) p. 144, or *Verantwortung,* p. 28).

4. A LETTER WRITTEN BY JAKOB AMMANN *to* BAENTZ SCHNEIDER AND HANS IM WEILER (Hans Müller or der Müller Hans in Jakob Ammann's account, (see *Begebenheit* (1936) p. 64.) excommunicating them. Quoted in the Peter Giger letter. (See *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908) p. 145, or *Verantwortung,* p. 26.)

5. A NOTICE SENT TO THE AMISH three different times asking them to confess that they had gone too far with their use of the ban. Mentioned in the Peter Giger letter. (See *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908) p. 145, and *Verantwortung,* p. 26).

6. A LETTER WRITTEN BY THE MINISTERS IN THE PALATINATE TO THE AMISH asking them to approach again the other side and avoid a division. Mentioned in the Christian Blank letter. (See *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908) p. 140, *Begebenheit* (1906) pp. 13, 14, (1936) p. 16, and *Verantwortung.*).

7. TWO LETTERS, ONE WRITTEN TO JAKOB GUT FROM BALTENHEIM, IN ALSACE, AND THE OTHER A REPLY TO IT. Mentioned in Jakob Gut's "Meidung" letter. (See *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1909) pp. 133, 134, *Begebenheit* (1906) p. 6, and *Verantwortung,* p. 27.)

8. A LETTER WRITTEN BY MINISTERS IN THE PALATINATE TO THE MINISTRY IN ALSACE advising them not to pay too much attention to Ammann. Mentioned in Jakob Ammann's letter of November 22, 1693, and also by the Jonas Lohr "Meidung" letter. (See *Begebenheit* (1936) pp. 75, 76 and *Verantwortung,* p. 29.)

9. A letter written to Hans Rudi Naegeli to which his "Meidung" letter is an answer. (See *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), p. 139.)

10. A letter written by Jakob Ammann from Alsace to the ministry in the Palatinate asking them to accept his view of the controversial issues. Mentioned in Ammann's letter of November 22, 1693. (See *Begebenheit* (1936) p. 82.)

11. Written statements by which the Amish placed themselves under the Ban. Mentioned in Uli Ammann's letter (*Begebenheit,* (1906) p. 41, (1936) p. 45.) It may be that these documents are the same as those written in 1700. If so the date 1698 as given in *Begebenheit* for Uli Amman's letter is a mistake and must be set after 1700.

12. A "Schrift" stating that the Mennonites were Ready to receive the Amish into fellowship again. Mentioned in Uli Ammann's letter (*Begebenheit* (1906) p. 42, (1936) p. 46).

13. A letter written by Rudolf Huszer and Peter Lehmann to opponents. Mentioned by C. H. Smith, in *Mennonite Immigration to Pennsylvania,* Norristown, 1929, p. 167, footnote 68, as extant but not found in the printed collections.

II

Causes of the Division and Points of Disagreement

To determine the specific underlying cause of any controversy is a difficult task. We can judge only by the actions and words of the participants and then our conclusion may not be altogether correct, since it is very possible that the motives behind the actions can not be learned. If we assign motives to actions we are liable to be mistaken in our judgment.

It is especially difficult to understand the cause of the Amish controversy, considering that it took place at a time when the Mennonites of Switzerland were suffering imprisonment because of their faith, and those in the Palatinate and Alsace were suffering the hardships of war that ravished their country. There is evidence of these things in the letters. Peter Giger mentions in his letter that he was imprisoned in Berne after he had first heard of "Meidung".[23] Gerhardt Roosen mentions his anxiety concerning those to whom he was writing because of the continual warfare which caused many to

23. Peter Giger letter, in *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), p. 142. "Wie ich, Peter Giger, vom ersten von der Meidung gehört habe, bin ich noch nicht bei der Gemein zu Bern in der Gefangenschaft." In *Verantwortung,* p. 25, "Wie ich am ersten von der Meidung gehört hab, war ich noch nicht bei der Gemeinde, sondern war in Bern in der Gefangenschaft."

flee from their homes,[24] and also his fear that Alsace would come under French control.[25] Uli Ammann includes "imprisoned brethren and sisters" in the salutation of his letter. Jakob Gut in his "Meidung" letter quotes from a letter written from prison by Matthias Zerfasz.[26] C. H. Smith says that two hundred forty Mennonite families had to flee from the Palatinate during the so-called war of the Palatinate, which began in 1688, and during which war the Palatinate was almost literally burned up as had been ordered by Louis XIV.[27] Very likely some of these Mennonite families were of the Amish division. Jakob Gut wrote from the Palatinate in 1699 of the experiences of his son-in-law as a refugee in Holland.[28] Just how a controversy could continue in the midst of such persecution and distress is indeed hard to understand. The cause of the controversy must have been deep under the surface of things and the apparent causes of the trouble could not have been more than mere aspects of it.

For the causes precipitating the trouble we must examine the letters written by the participants. Uli Ammann, possibly a brother of Jakob Ammann, mentions three issues on which Hans Reist, the leader of the opposing side, would not agree with them, namely: "Meidung" (shunning or avoidance of excommunicated persons), the excommunication of a woman who had admitted speaking a falsehood, and the saying that true or noble-hearted persons would be saved.[29] Of course, he tried to show that Reist was to blame for not believing in "Meidung", for not excommunicating the woman, and for, as the Amish accused, saying that all noble-hearted persons would be saved. Jakob Ammann in his letter of November 22, 1693, accuses Reist and his group of having forsaken the doctrines of Christ and the Apostles[30] by their attitude to these three issues. In

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24. Gerhardt Roosen letter, in *Gemeinde Kalender* (1909), p. 131, *Begebenheit* (1906), p. 18, (1936) p. 21, "Oftmals bin ich in diesen langwierigen schweren Krieg mit meinen Gedanken bei euch gewesen und habe Sorge über euch gehabt, dasz es übel würde sein haushalten, so der Eine hierhin, der andere dorthin fliehen muszte."

25. Same letter, in *Gemeinde Kalender,* p. 131. The *Begebenheit* version is slightly different.

26. *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), pp. 135, 136; *Begebenheit* (1906) pp. 9, 10, (1936) pp. 11, 12.

27. C. H. Smith, *The Mennonites,* Berne, 1920, p. 128.

28. *Gemeinde Kalender* (1915) pp. 121, 122; also *Verantwortung,* p. 33.

29. ("Den Treuherzigen die Seligkeit zu sprechen"). *Begebenheit,* (1906) pp. 25-27, (1936) pp. 28-31.

30. *Ibid.,* (1936) pp. 61, 67, 68.

another letter Ammann asked all persons to report to him how they believed on these three issues. (He did not specify the case of the woman who admitted speaking a falsehood but spoke of disciplining falsehood in general).[31] He actually excommunicated Niklaus Moser, Peter Giger, and some others on the charge of falsehood because they had once said they believed on "Meidung" and then when they saw that Reist and Ammann disagreed on the interpretation of the teaching, they refused to accept the doctrine with Ammann's emphasis.[32] In the letter written by Peter Giger we see that before the question of "Meidung" had made much trouble, Hans Reist had a controversy in his congregation because Ammann had started holding the communion service twice a year.[33] There is however no indication that this question had any large part in the controversy. The practice of feetwashing must also have been introduced by Ammann and practiced by the Amish during the time of the controversy, but we have no evidence in the letters written at the time that this practice had any part in causing the division. It is interesting to note that the letter written by Christian Blank was written for the express purpose of proving that neither "Meidung" nor feetwashing was the cause of the division.[34] But this in itself is evidence that feetwashing as well as "Meidung" was practiced by the Amish and not by the other group at the time the letter was written. C. H. Smith says, "The Swiss church had never adopted the practice. But Amman now also introduced the first form of its observance among his followers."[35] Even though we have no evidence that feetwashing had any part in starting the controversy, we know that it had a part before the trouble was over, for Uli Ammann accuses the other side of making it an issue when the Amish sought a reconciliation,[36] and again in a letter written January 21, 1711 we find that the Amish in another attempt at reconciliation wished to continue the practice.[37]

Some of the other things for which Ammann contended were: uniformity in dress, which included the style of hats, garments for

31. *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), p. 146, and *Verantwortung,* p. 27.
32. *Begebenheit* (1936), pp. 62, 63. See also *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), p. 144.
33. *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), p. 142, and *Verantwortung,* p. 25.
34. *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), pp. 138, 141; *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 10, 16, (1936), pp. 13, 18; also *Verantwortung.*
35. Smith, *The Mennonite Immigration to Pennsylvania,* Norristown, 1929, p. 224.
36. *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 43, 44, (1936), pp. 47, 48.
37. *Gemeinde Kalender* (1915), p. 124; *Verantwortung,* p. 38.

the body, shoes and stockings.[38] He also taught against the trimming of the beard and attending services in the state churches. In fact he excommunicated a number of persons in the congregation at Markirch because they would not confess with him that it was wrong to attend services at the state church.[39] Some of the other disputes that arose during the course of the controversy concerned to which side a meeting house belonged[40] and who had the higher authority, Reist or Ammann.[41] One author has said, "There seems to have been some dispute also regarding the use of tobacco,"[42] but there is no mention of tobacco in any of the documents in the three printed collections. The main issues of the controversy were the first three mentioned, namely: (1) "Meidung", (2) whether those who speak falsehoods should be excommunicated, (3) and whether one could say that true-hearted persons would be saved.

Some of those on the other side thought "Meidung" as Ammann would have it was unscriptural, others thought that it had a certain amount of good in it, but that the practice should not be forced on those who did not believe in it. Another point which those on the Reist side questioned was Ammann's method of excommunicating those who did not believe as he did.[43] Of all these various

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38. Jakob Ammann's letter of Nov. 22, 1693, in *Begebenheit* (1936), pp. 76, 77; also Gerhardt Roosen letter, in *Gemeinde Kalender* (1909), p. 139, and in *Begebenheit* (1906), p. 19, (1936), p. 23.

39. *Begebenheit* (1936), pp. 76, 77.

40. Letter by Peter Lehman and Rudolph Huszer, in *Verantwortung,* p. 37. "Auch um das Gemeindehaus ist es angegangen. Er (Ammann) sagte, das haus sei ihres, die es gekauft hätten, haben den Glauben mit ihm. Huszer sagte, es ist nicht wahr."

41. *Begebenheit* (1936), p. 61, "Auch hat der Hüsli Hans zu mir Jaggi Ammon selbsten gesagt er stand vor mir, . . . Ist das nicht ein Geistlicher Hochmut?"

42. C. H. Smith, in Hartzler and Kauffman's *Mennonite Church History,* Scottdale, 1907, p. 101.

43. This general attitude is quite well illustrated by a quotation from Jakob Gut's "Meidung" Letter; "Darum verstehe ich, er habe zu ihnen von der geistlichen Speise geredet, die sollen sie nicht mit ihnen essen, sondern von ihnen hinaus thun, wer da böse ist. So ist mein Verstand, der Apostel (habe) in diesem Kapitel von dem Bann gehandelt und nicht von der Meidung. So aber verstehe ich, dasz ein Ausgebannter erstlich soll ermahnt werden als ein Bruder 2. Thessal. 3. Und so er einmal und abermal vermahnt ist, soll man ihm meiden Tit. 3. Und soll dann die Meidung nicht allein im Essen und Trinken, sondern nichts mit ihm zu schaffen haben. . . . Und wie ich Jakob Ammann und an die seinen begehrt habe, sie sollen die Meidung nach ihrem Verstand brauchen, und andern darin kein Gesetz machen, die mit ihnen diese Meidung nicht können verstehen, so könne ich sie wohl für Brüder halten, und so sie es noch thun, so hoffe ich, man könne wohl wieder zusammentreten, wenn sie ihr unordentliches Bannen für unrecht erkennen und nicht mehr thun." *Gemeinde Kalender* (1909), pp. 134, 135; *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 7, 8, (1936), pp. 9, 10; *Verantwortung,* p. 28.

things, "Meidung" seems to be the subject of most of the doctrinal contention.

Just why "Meidung" should become the main issue of a bitter controversy among persons who were suffering the terror of war and persecution for their faith requires careful study.[44] The very conception that brought the Anabaptist movement into existence in 1525 was that the true church should consist of believers only and should be pure with no evil in the membership.[45] This of course necessitated the use of the ban or excommunication for such persons who had been baptised into the church and afterwards had fallen into sin or proved to be unregenerate persons. The second article of the Schleitheim Confession (the first Anabaptist Confession of Faith, 1527) was on the Ban.[46]

By the time the Anabaptist movement had spread into the Netherlands and was being organized by the Philips brothers and Menno Simons, some began to teach that according to I Corinthians 5, 11, ("if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat") the members of the church should not eat a meal or have anything to do with a person who had been excommunicated. Menno Simons himself taught this.[47] This avoidance or shunning was to be practiced even by members of the immediate families of the excommunicated person, and if that person were either husband or wife the usual relations between them were to be discontinued.[48] In some places this teaching was taken so far

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44. "Meidung" is mentioned in all but one of the letters and documents in the three printed collections. It is not mentioned in the list or collection of confessions by Ammann and others of his group.

45. John Horsch, "The Faith of the Swiss Brethren," in *Mennonite Quarterly Review,* Oct. 1930, in a footnote quoting from *Zwinglis Werke,* Vol. III, p. 370, quotes Conrad Grebel, who is considered to be the first leader of the Anabaptists (See H. S. Bender, in *Mennonite Quarterly Review,* Jan., 1936, pp. 7, 8.) as saying, "that baptism is to be administered to him 'who has been converted through the Word of God, whose heart is changed and who desires to walk henceforth in newness of life.'"

46. Smith, *Mennonites of America,* p. 43.

47. *The Complete Works of Menno Simons,* (Funk translation, Elkhart, 1871), part I, p. 247. "We should exclude the restless, stubborn wranglers and schismatists, together with the offensive, carnal and lewd, from his holy congregation, church and house of peace; and according to the Scriptures, avoid and shun them till they repent." Other similar passages could be quoted.

48. *Ibid.,* part I, p. 248. "The faithful apostles, John and Paul, implicitly teach us, that in the first place we are to shun the apostates, lest they contaminate us with the impure, deceiving doctrine, and with their ungodly carnal lives; that we do not partake of their unfruitful works, and for the reason above assigned; and since we plainly see that none can sooner contaminate and pollute us, than our own fathers,

that some ministers tried to separate husband and wife. On November 12, 1556, Menno Simons wrote to the church at Emden in East Friesland:

> "With a sorrowful heart I make known to the brethren that I receive one letter after another complaining of the excommunication, in regard to husband and wife; which causes great trouble with some, at which I am not at all surprised. I have feared the issue, which cannot be settled under such excitement as is at present found in the Netherlands. . . . In view of this, my heart was filled with sorrow, on hearing that a certain length of time was given to Swantje Rutgers, in which to leave her husband; or that, in case of her failure to leave him she was to be excommunicated and delivered over to Satan."[49]

It is easy to see how this view could make trouble in the church. C. H. Smith says, "It resulted in driving Obbe Philips from the Anabaptist ranks and was the cause of considerable trouble later on."[50] It caused several divisions in the Netherlands.[51] By 1591 conditions were such that a conference was held and some peace negotiations made, but the peace didn't last. It was not until 1632, when the Dortrecht Confession of Faith was drawn up and adopted by fifty-one ministers in Holland and North Germany, that the church in that section was again unified.[52]

It was through the Dortrecht confession that "Meidung" or the shunning of expelled members (taught in Article Seventeen) was introduced to the Swiss, Palatine, and Alsatian churches. It was adopted by a group of thirteen Alsatian ministers February 4, 1660.[53] However, there seems to have been some misunderstanding

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mothers, husbands, wives, or children, if they are corrupted, and especially on account of the daily intercourse with, and natural love for them, which of necessity is existing between them; and moreover, since husband and wife are one flesh, I scarcely know how they will escape the snares of death, if they do not especially observe the holy word and counsel of the Lord in this respect. . . . And that anyone could live in the midst of such wanton, carnal, ungodly abominations, and not be hurt in the faith, love and unction, and have intercourse with such abominable, unclean, adhesive pitch vessels, and not be polluted in his conscience, I will leave all who have an understanding of the holy word, to reflect upon with the unction of the Spirit." A little farther on, p. 249, he says, "Is there now a single individual under the canopy of Heaven, learned or unlearned, young or old, . . . who can truthfully teach us that the espousals of the spirit, made with Christ through faith, should yield to human wedlock? . . . Or that spiritual love has to yield to conjugal love?"

49. *Ibid.*, part I, p. 284.

50. Smith, *Mennonites of America,* 1909, p. 63.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 68. "On this question the denomination was split up into several party divisions."

52. Hartzler and Kauffman, *op. cit.*, pp. 392-395.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 393, 394.

on the question of "Meidung" at the time they signed it. The Alsatians, it seems, were of the opinion that the brethren in Switzerland were also adopting the entire Dortrecht Confession; and at least some merely signed it because they thought it was being universally accepted by their Anabaptist or Mennonite brethren.[54] Not all of the Alsatian ministers accepted "Meidung" as Menno Simons taught it and as Ammann later tried to enforce it, for we find that Rudolph Egli, one of the men who signed the statement adopting the Dortrecht Confession,[55] spoke against the teaching.[56] Evidently it was not practiced in its extreme form for at least thirty years, or until the time of the Amish Controversy.

Even if the Dortrecht Confession was not adopted by the Swiss, and "Meidung" not practiced in Alsace, the teaching was nevertheless not unknown, and it is altogether possible that it was practiced in a mild form. The fact that Peter Giger and Niklaus Moser at first told Ammann that they accepted the teaching indicates that they believed in at least a mild practice of it.[57]

Just how much influence the writings of Menno Simons and Dirk Philips had on these people is hard to say. From the letters we glean little. Jakob Gut, from the upper Palatinate, mentions "Menno Simons Buch" in such a way as to indicate that the work was familiar to the readers.[58] But aside from that we find no reference to any of his works. However, the emphasis that Ammann placed on the everyday practice of "Meidung" over against a purely spiritual avoidance may indicate that his conclusions were at least partially based on some writings similar to those of Menno. A

54. Jonas Lohr quotes from a letter written by some Alsatian ministers in which we find the following statement: "Der Jakob Amman will haben, dasz die Gebannten sollen gemieden werden in leiblicher, sowohl wie in geistlicher Speise, wie es in dem Glaubensbekenntnis-Büchlein steht, und wir in Elsass sind auf dem zugestanden. Wir waren aber auch in dem Sinn, das die ganze Brüderschaft in der Schweiz einhellig seien, und wir in heiliger Schrift erkannt, dasz es soll also sein." *Verantwortung,* p. 29.

55. Hartzler and Kauffman, *op. cit.,* pp. 393, 394.

56. "Aber in den Oberländern und im Schweizerland findet man nichts davon, dasz unsere Vorgänger als Marti Meili, Rudi Hägi, und Rudi Egli, der mir selbst hart wider die Meidung geredet hat und gesagt, man soll bei der alten Ordnung bleiben und nichts Neues annehmen." *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1915), pp. 121, 122; and *Verantwortung,* p. 33.

57. *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), pp. 138-140, *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 10-13, (1936), pp. 13-16, *Verantwortung,* pp. 62, 63.

58. *Gemeinde Kalender* (1915), p. 121, and *Verantwortung,* p. 33. The first German edition of any of Menno Simons' writings was the "Fundament Buch" which appeared in 1575. No other German edition of this or any other of Menno's writings is known before the Büdingen "Kurzer Auszug" of 1758. The "Fundamentbuch" contains a lengthy chapter on "Bann und Absonderung."

German edition of Dirk Philips' *Von dem Evangelischen Bann und Meidung* was published in Amsterdam in 1615.

Various opinions may be advanced as to the reason underlying the controversy. C. Henry Smith says that a strong spirit of individualism was responsible for this division. He also says that this same spirit of individualism inspired these people to be able to undergo great persecution.[59] We notice that while he interprets almost the whole of Mennonite history from this viewpoint, not all authors agree with him. One person writing from Tuebingen in *The Christian Exponent* in 1924, refutes this by saying:

> "For instance, toleration and the 'Ban' can scarcely be reconciled, yet the ban, according to competent scholars writing in the 'Mennonite Lexicon,' was practiced by all kinds of 'Täufer' from the very beginning and was the instrument of an exceedingly strict discipline. It was the second article of the Schleitheim Confession of 1527. In fact it was one of the outstanding contrasts between the early 'Täufer' and the state churches of the day, the intolerant discipline of life and conduct, the purification of the church."[60]

In other words, we may say that if this spirit of individualism was a spirit of tolerance for one-another's views it is quite evident that it was not the cause of the controversy. It is true that some of the persons concerned said that they would gladly allow Ammann and his followers to practice "Meidung" if they would not force those who interpreted the teaching differently to practice it;[61] but it was not this attitude that caused the division, quite the contrary.

Perhaps Smith meant that various individuals were each so sure that what he believed and practiced was right and in accordance with scriptural teaching that he wouldn't give in to the other person's viewpoint. This view would be more nearly true to fact. It is true that Ammann and his followers asked the other group to prove from Scripture that they were right.[62] But even before he had

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59. C. H. Smith, *The Mennonites,* Berne, 1920, p. 87.

60. H. S. Bender, "The Historical Approach," in "The Open Forum" in *The Christian Exponent,* Apr. 11, 1924, p. 127.

61. Letter by Jakob Gut, *Gemeinde Kalender* (1909), p. 135; *Begebenheit* (1906), p. 8, (1936), p. 10; *Verantwortung,* p. 28.

62. *Jakob Ammann's Warnungs-Schrift, Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), p. 146; *Verantwortung,* p. 27, "ob ihr die streitigen Artikel mit uns bekennen könnt, . . . , oder uns mit Gottes Wort eines andern berichten könnt, so wollen wir uns weisen lassen." Also Uli Amman's letter, *Begebenheit,* 1936, pp. 33, 34, "oder wenn sie uns mit des Herrn wort eines Besseren berichten können, so wollten wir uns weisen Lassen."

made this statement, when Hans Reist[63] or Peter Giger[64] quoted the Scripture, "What enters the mouth does not defile the man, but what goes out of the mouth," Ammann rather impatiently evaded the discussion. It seems neither side would yield.

Another conclusion that one may come to is that those on one side or the other were right and did as well as they could, considering human weakness. This is the opinion held by both sides during the controversy. Uli Ammann, in his letter, goes to some length to show that they had reasons and scriptural ground for the steps they had taken, except in that they had been a little too rash in excommunicating Hans Reist and his group without first consulting their congregations.[65] Some of those on the other side were just as sure that Ammann and his group were in the wrong and that they were right.[66]

Again, one may think that the controversy was due to the personal ambitions for leadership by one or the other and that personality and ability for leadership brought each a large following. There is evidence that would support this idea. Early in the controversy some persons wrote to the church in Alsace that they should not allow themselves to be stirred up by one man such as Jakob Ammann.[67] Other such statements as, "Woher nimmt sich den Freund Jakob Ammann vor,"[68] may be quoted to show that the one party blamed Ammann for being ambitious. On the other hand Ammann accused Hans Reist of possessing spiritual pride ("geistlicher Hochmut") stating that Reist said he had more authority than Ammann, since he was the older of the two.[69] These accusations by one group that the leader of the other was seeking pre-eminence may hint that the accusers themselves may have had a few ambitions of their own or that they may have been just a bit jealous.

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63. Peter Giger letter, *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), p. 142, *Verantwortung,* p. 25.

64. *Ibid., Gemeinde Kalender,* p. 143, *Verantwortung,* p. 26.

65. *Begebenheit,* (1936), pp. 26-45.

66. Letter to Hans Reist, *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), p. 150, *Verantwortung,* p. 36: "Es wären noch viel Sprüche in Heiliger Schrift, woraus wir sehen könnten, was zur Seelen förderlich wäre, dawider mit dieser . . . Meidungslehre und fleischlichen Vernunft-Glauben gestritten wird und die wahre Tugend Christi und seine Glieder verschwiegen ist."

67. See Jonas Lohr letter, *Verantwortung,* p. 29. Also Jakob Ammann letter, *Begebenheit,* (1936), pp. 75, 76.

68. Gerhardt Roosen letter, *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1909), p. 140, or *Begebenheit,* (1906), p. 20, (1936), p. 23.

69. *Begebenheit,* (1936), pp. 60, 61.

In spite of all the wrangling and bitter feeling that existed between the two sides there is evidence that there also existed a deep seated concern for the welfare of the Church. It would not be at all fair to say that Ammann started on his tour of Switzerland in order to bring about a division or even to start a quarrel. He had been hearing reports that in some places church discipline was not very strict and that some ministers even took the attitude that a good life was all that was necessary for salvation.[70] Possibly he had read some of Menno Simons' writings (I cannot prove this), and being a comparatively young man[71] was enthused with the idea of "Meidung" and strict discipline. When he heard about the lack of discipline he probably decided to find out the facts and do what he could to correct conditions. That there were those who opposed Ammann who also had a deep concern for the Church can not be denied. The controversy was quite a shock to some of the peace-loving ministers in the Palatinate who, when they heard about Ammann placing Reist and six others under the ban, wrote him and his followers asking them to try to become reconciled.[72] One can imagine the additional shock they received when he answered in the words, "Ye foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, so that you do not believe the truth?"[73] While Ammann's purpose may have been good enough, his method was rash and unkind.

Whatever was the cause of the division, whether it was a selfish individualism, ambition, or an impatient zeal for the purification of the church, it is still hard to understand just how such a dispute was possible at a time when the church was undergoing the severe tests of persecution and war. It was a time when one would ordinarily think the church would be drawn closer together by suffering and yet we see that just the opposite occurred—not because of suffering, but during suffering. The story of this division may well teach us that when there is a tendency toward disunion, persecution and suffering will not always bring about unity in the church. Similar

70. See Christian Blank letter; also introduction to some letters.

71. That Ammann was a comparatively young man may be inferred from the fact that he admits being younger than Reist (*Begebenheit* (1936), pp. 60, 61) and also from the letter by P. Lehman and R. Huszer, where he is quoted as saying to them, "Schämet euch, ihr Graue-Köpfe, ihr Lügner und Ausgebannte." The rashness and impatience with which he acted also indicates youth.

72. Christian Blank letter, *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), p. 140, *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 13, 14, (1936), p. 16, also *Verantwortung*.

73. Jakob Ammann letter, *Begebenheit* (1936), p. 80; see also Christian Blank letter, same pages as note 51.

conditions existed among the Mennonites of Holland, where several serious divisions occurred during persecution in the sixteenth century.

III

The Division

Just when the teaching of "Meidung" began to make any stir among the Swiss Anabaptists is difficult to determine. That the teaching was known in Switzerland before 1660 we learn from Jakob Gut's letter to Peter Lehmann and Rudi Huszer, written in 1699. Gut referred to some of their predecessors in Switzerland, mentioning by name Martin Meili, Rudi Hägi, and Rudi Egli, who did not practice "Meidung." He mentioned hearing Egli "speaking hard" against it.[74] Martin Meili and Rudi Egli were in the vicinity of Zurich, Switzerland in 1635 and 1637. Egli had been imprisoned in 1635 and again in 1637 when his property was confiscated.[75] We conclude that Gut heard Egli speaking against "Meidung" before 1660 from the fact that in that year we find Egli's signature with those ministers in Alsace who adopted the Dortrecht confession.[76] Peter Giger, an eyewitness of a number of the events of the division, said that the first time he had heard of the teaching was sometime before his imprisonment in Berne.[77] Even though the teaching was known and at least nominally adopted in 1660 by some ministers in Alsace, there is no evidence in the letters written during the time of the Amish controversy that it had caused any serious trouble before Jakob Ammann insisted that it be practiced.

The first difficulty in which Ammann was involved arose after he started holding the communion service twice a year instead of only once as had been the practice in Switzerland. In a conference called to discuss this, two ministers, Benedict (Bäntz) Schneider, and Hans Reist (in some of the letters called Hüsli Hans or Heüsli Hans) gave their opinion that it was not necessary to hold communion twice a year. It seems that it was decided to allow the practice, but Reist did not practice it himself. This resulted in a contro-

74. *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1915), pp. 121, 122, *Verantwortung,* p. 33.

75. *Märtyrer Spiegel,* Part II, pp. 604-607.

76. See Hartzler and Kauffman, *op. cit.,* p. 394.

77. *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), p. 142, *Verantwortung,* p. 25, "Wie Ich, Peter Giger vom ersten von der Meidung gehört habe, bin ich noch nicht bei der Gemein zu Bern in der Gefangenschaft."

versy in Reist's congregation, and Reist called on Niklaus Moser and Peter Giger for help.[78]

When Ammann heard that the two ministers were going to Reist he asked them to find out what Reist believed concerning "Meidung". Reist's answer was, "What enters the mouth does not defile the man, but what comes out of the mouth." From this time on we do not hear any more of the communion trouble. Instead "Meidung" became the main issue of the controversy between Ammann and Reist.[79]

Shortly after this Jakob Ammann took Uli Ammann, Christian Blank, and Niklaus Augspurger with him on a tour of the churches to find out just what the ministers in Switzerland believed about "Meidung". The first stopping-place was near Friedersmatt in Niklaus Moser's congregation.[80] When they asked Moser if he believed in "Meidung" he answered in the affirmative.[81] Ammann then said he had heard that there were ministers who taught that true-hearted persons would be saved.[82] Moser replied that he had heard nothing of it.[83] Ammann also announced that they wanted to go into the Emmenthal and speak with Reist. Moser advised them to first go to Bäntz Schneider, the bishop (Aelteste), and hear what he had to say.[84]

Instead of going to Schneider the little company went toward Reutenen[85] and called a meeting a short distance[86] from Peter Giger's home. Giger knew nothing about the meeting until he was summoned to it after he had retired for the evening. When he arrived the meeting was almost over. However, after the meeting he went into a small room with some of the other ministers, among whom were Jakob and Uli Ammann, Christian Blank, Niklaus Augspurger, Michael zu Blasen, and Christian Göumann. Here it was decided to continue the investigation and it is likely that it was

78. Peter Giger letter, *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), p. 142, *Verantwortung,* p. 25.

79. *Ibid.,* same pages; see also Jakob Ammann letter in *Begebenheit,* (1936), p. 59.

80. Giger letter, same pages as note 5; also Christian Blank letter, *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), p. 138, *Begebenheit,* (1906), p. 11, (1936), p. 13, *Verantwortung,* p. 23.

81. J. Ammann letter, *Begebenheit,* (1936), p. 62.

82. "Er höre sagen, es seien Diener, die sprechen den Treuherzigen die Seligkeit zu." Peter Giger letter.

83. Blank letter.

84. Giger letter.

85. Blank letter.

86. "Nicht ein Viertelstunde." Giger letter.

also at this meeting that Giger admitted believing in "Meidung".[87] Before they left Giger's community they summoned Niklaus Baltzli to them from Habstetten and accused him of teaching that all true-hearted persons would be saved. Baltzli said he did not know that he had done so and asked that they be patient with him.[88]

From Reutenen the three went to Utigen, to which place they summoned Hans Reist. When asked about his position on "Meidung", Reist answered, "What one eats is no sin; Christ also ate with publicans and sinners." Ammann also asked him whether persons who are known to be speakers of falsehood should be excommunicated.[89] The answer he gave was evidently not satisfactory to Ammann's group, who declared that Reist had a woman in his congregation, whom they claimed Reist did not excommunicate when she admitted falsehood.[90] About this time they also asked Peter zu Schwartzentrub and Jägi im Mos, Peter im Gul (Ingul), and Peter Gerber whether they accepted the teaching of "Meidung." Peter zu Schwartzentrub was the only one of these who at first accepted it, but he finally decided against it.[91]

The investigators next went to Eggiwyl and asked Peter Habegger and Gollgrab Peter about "Meidung". Their answer was that it would be well if the entire ministry would assemble and decide on a uniform practice.[92] Accordingly Jakob Ammann called a meeting of the Swiss ministry in Niklaus Moser's barn.[93] But the ministers did not all come, and among those absent was Hans Reist.[94] When Niklaus Moser, Peter zu Schwartzentrub, Peter im Gul, and Peter Giger discussed whether or not they wanted to accept the teaching of "Meidung", Peter Geiger announced that he would not decide until the entire ministry in Switzerland would come together and decide after a careful study of the scriptures.[95] This is also the answer he gave to Jakob Ammann when he again asked about "Mei-

87. Blank letter, "da hat er die Meidung bekannt." Also see J. Ammann letter, *Begebenheit,* (1936), p. 62.

88. Blank letter.

89. Blank letter; and J. Ammann letter, *Begebenheit* (1936), p. 59.

90. Uli Ammann letter, *Begebenheit,* (1906), p. 26, (1936), pp. 29, 30; Also Jakob Ammann letter, *Begebenheit,* (1936), p. 59.

91. J. Ammann letter, *Begebenheit* (1936), p. 62 also Giger letter.

92. Blank letter.

93. Giger letter.

94. Blank letter.

95. Giger letter.

dung". Niklaus Moser gave a similar answer.[96] When they saw that they could not come to a conclusion that day, they decided to call another meeting later. Jakob Ammann wanted it in eight days and Peter Giger wanted it in three weeks. After a little discussion they compromised on two weeks.[97]

Sometime after Ammann and his party left Reist's community, Jakob Ammann sent Hans Gerber and Peter Zimmerman back to Reist to ask him again about his stand on "Meidung". Reist did not give a verbal answer, but instead he shortly afterwards wrote a letter, stating that he did not accept "Meidung" and also asked his readers not to pay too much attention to the young fellow, Ammann.[98] (These men may also have been sent to announce the meeting at Moser's barn). Sometime before the meeting that was decided on at Moser's barn Jakob Ammann again contacted Reist. But Reist would not commit himself about teaching that truehearted persons would be saved. This contact was probably made by sending Niklaus Augspurger and Hans Roller to Reist (probably to announce the meeting two weeks after the one at Moser's barn.)[99] Some time before this meeting Peter Giger wrote a letter that was circulated at least among a part of the ministry in Switzerland and the Palatinate. We do not know much about the contents of the letter except that it was not sympathetic with Jakob Ammann's actions.[100]

When the ministers assembled after the allotted two weeks, there was a fairly large gathering but Hans Reist did not appear. Among those present were Niklaus Moser, Peter Schwartz, Peter Giger, Hans im Wiler,[101] Jakob Ammann, Uli Ammann, Niklaus Augspurger, Christian Blank, Peter Zimmerman, Peter Habegger, Peter im Gul, and Jakob Schwartz.[102] There were also at least three women there. While they were awaiting the arrival of Hans Reist and others, Peter Geiger mentioned the scripture, "What enters the mouth does not defile a man, but what goes out of the mouth." Am-

96. Blank letter; also J. Ammann letter, *Begebenheit* (1936), p. 63.

97. Blank letter; also Giger letter.

98. J. Ammann's letter, *Begebenheit,* (1936), p. 60; also Uli Ammann's letter, *Begebenheit,* (1906), p. 25, (1936), p. 29.

99. J. Ammann's letter, *Begebenheit,* (1936), pp. 61, 62.

100. Jakob Gut's "Meidung" letter, *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1909), p. 135, *Begebenheit,* (1906), p. 8, (1936), p. 10, *Verantwortung,* p. 28.

101. Perhaps Müller Hans or Hans Müller as spoken of elsewhere.

102. These names are from the Giger letter and J. Ammann's letter.

mann replied that that had nothing to do with the question. Then Peter Giger quoted, "If ye bite and devour one another, see that ye be not consumed one of another," and begged of Ammann that he would not bring about a division in the church.[103] When they had waited some time for Hans Reist and certain others, they sent one or more of the women out to ask them to come, but the women brought back the word that since it was harvest these men found it to be an inconvenient time and that they could not come.[104] By this time Jakob Ammann seems to have been quite impatient and interpreted the absence of these men as an indication of their indifference. Then he brought forth a letter on which were listed six charges against Hans Reist. When he had read these charges he declared Hans Reist to be excommunicated.[105] This created quite a stir. One woman fell on her knees before him and begged him to be patient.[106] However, he then turned toward Niklaus Moser and again asked his opinion on "Meidung". Moser answered that he had not asked the opinion of his congregation and that he could not speak for them. J. Ammann then asked Peter Giger again and Giger replied that he would not give his opinion until the ministers were all present. Upon these answers Reist excommunicated them charging them with falsehood. Then he turned to Peter Habegger, Jakob Schwartz, and Peter im Gul, and asked them if they accepted "Meidung." When they did not he excommunicated them. Upon this Peter Zimmerman said, "There you have it," and the meeting broke up, the Ammann party leaving the building without shaking hands. This was near noon. A little later seven of the "Amish" held a meeting near that place and forbade that those under the ban be told about it.[107] Shortly after this Jakob Ammann sent Hans Gerber and Christian Blank to Hans im Wiler (or Müller Hans of Arnau) and Bäntz Schneider to ask them if they would recognize "Meidung".[108] When they would not confess belief in the doctrine, Ammann wrote a letter expelling them.[109] About this time Ammann also expelled Niklaus Baltzli, whom he had called from Habstetten

103. Giger letter.
104. *Ibid.;* also Blank letter.
105. Giger letter.
106. Blank letter.
107. Giger letter.
108. J. Ammann letter, in *Begebenheit,* (1936), pp. 64, 65.
109. Giger letter.

to Peter Giger's home and accused of teaching that true-hearted persons would be saved.[110]

We notice that J. Ammann did not excommunicate any of these persons without attempting to get their opinions several times. In his letter of Nov. 22, 1693, he pointed out that in each case except one he had several witnesses, as evidence that he had followed to the letter the teaching of Matthew 18 concerning the method of correcting the evils in the church.[111] In the case of Niklaus Baltzli, whom he expelled on the charge of untruthfulness, Ammann said that since "Satan is a liar, and the father of lies," the guilty person should be expelled without previous admonition or warning.[112]

It was either before Jakob Ammann started his tour through Switzerland or shortly after the division that he expelled a number of members of the church at Markirch in Alsace because they would not admit that attending services in the state church was wrong.[113]

To determine the dates of the various events of the division is difficult since the letters were written after the events occurred. We know from the Peter Giger letter that the meeting when Hans Reist and five others were expelled was at harvest time. The beginning of the tour through Switzerland may not have been more than a month before. How long before this the trouble arose about the observance of communion once or twice a year, we do not know, but it was probably not more than six months or a year, and it is possible that it was less than that. 1693 is the year that has generally been accepted as the one in which the division took place. In his *Warnungs-Schrift* Jakob Ammann sets the dates of February 20 and March 7, as the time at which the people were to have decided to agree with him or be expelled. At the end of the letter the year 1693 is mentioned. If Ammann wrote this letter sometime between January 1 and February 20 of that year the division must have taken place in 1692. However, Uli Ammann tells of a meeting that was called in Alsace seven or eight months after the division and as a result of which a statement was made by Swiss and Palatine ministers as to why they could not agree with Jakob Ammann. The statement to which Uli Ammann referred is dated March 13, 1694.

110. J. Ammann letter, *Begebenheit,* (1936), p. 65.
111. *Ibid.,* pp. 59-64.
112. *Ibid.,* p. 65.
113. *Ibid.,* pp. 76, 77.

This proves that the division occurred in late July or early August of 1693.[114]

The events of this division took place rapidly. It may be that there had been considerable difference of opinion ever since 1660 when the churches in Alsace adopted the Dortrecht confession. But we do not know of any serious difficulty until Jakob Ammann appeared on the scene and in his attempt to "clean house", as it were, was too hasty and indiscreet.

IV

Events after the Division and Attempts at Reconciliation

If Jakob Ammann thought that by expelling a number of his fellow ministers he could restore unity in the church he was badly mistaken, for the news of the expulsion of Hans Reist and the others was soon known throughout the churches, not only in Switzerland, but also in the Palatinate and in Alsace. Various persons began to write letters telling what happened, asking what the trouble was about, stating their views, or trying to urge reconciliation. These letters only served to aggravate the situation.

Almost immediately after they had been expelled, Niklaus Moser and Peter Giger were asked by some of the ministers who had not been excommunicated to again take up the work of the ministry. After Bäntz Schneider and Hans im Weiler were expelled, those under the ban wrote the "Amish" a note asking them to confess that they had gone too far. This request was made three times, but the only answer received was that the "Amish" would have nothing to do with them unless they adopted "Meidung". When the news of this went out some men went to Jakob Ammann, but he refused to listen to them. Again Peter Giger and Hans Zaugg went to Jakob and Uli Ammann and asked for a conference at which lay-members might be present. It was only after the third petition that Ammann expressed his desire to be there. When his group arrived at the meeting no lay-members were present. Nothing was accomplished at this meeting, for after Jakob Ammann spoke, he refused to stay to hear either Niklaus Moser or Peter Giger.[115]

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114. See Uli Ammann's letter, *Begebenheit,* (1906), pp. 32, 33, (1936), pp. 36, 37. The statement written and signed by the Swiss and Palatine ministers may be found in *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1915), pp. 123, 124, and in *Verantwortung,* p. 29.

115. Giger letter; also Blank letter.

Very shortly after the division in Switzerland, persons from the Emmenthal wrote to the brotherhood in the Palatinate describing what happened.[116] This created some interest and concern for the welfare of the church, and on October 16, 1693,[117] some ministers from the Palatinate wrote to the Amish asking them to seek a reconciliation with those whom they had excommunicated.[118] The writers had evidently heard that Ammann had also expelled some persons at Markirch in Alsace, and asked him concerning his actions in both communities.[119] They had also received a letter from the ministry in Alsace. This letter explained that the ministry in Alsace understood that the Swiss were of one mind with them when they adopted the Dortrecht confession in 1660.[120] The Palatinate leaders also wrote to the ministry in Alsace advising them not to pay too much attention to Jakob Ammann and his new teaching.[121]

Ammann received the letter asking him to seek a reconciliation with the brethren in Switzerland on Nov. 3, 1693.[122] He answered with a long letter in which he defended the course he had taken in Switzerland and at Markirch by emphasizing that in each case he had given more than one and two admonitions, mentioning the names of witnesses who were with him. He also defended his position on "Meidung" and the other issues, and took the Palatine ministers to task for listening to the excommunicated schismatics and sinners, and also for writing to the ministers in Alsace. He also asked them to agree with him in the controversial articles or to be in danger of being expelled. Ammann was in Alsace when he finished the letter on November 22, 1693, and had the approval of a number of the ministers there, who signed his letter. The signatures on the letter are Jakob Kleiner, Jacob Kauffman, Hans Moyer, Peter Zimmerman, Hans Bachman, Hans Neuhauser, Felix Hager, Nigli Augspurger, Heinrich Gerei, Christle Steiner, Jakob Ammann, Ully Oswalt, Ully Amman.[123]

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116. Giger letter.

117. For the date of this letter see J. Ammann letter written in answer to this, *Begebenheit,* (1936), p. 58.

118. Blank letter.

119. Jakob Ammann letter, in *Begebenheit,* (1936), p. 82.

120. The letter is quoted in the Jonas Lohr letter, *Verantwortung,* p. 22.

121. Jonas Lohr letter, *Verantwortung,* p. 22; also J. Ammann letter, *Begebenheit,* (1936), pp. 75, 76.

122. J. Ammann letter, *Begebenheit,* (1936), p. 58.

123. The letter is printed in *Begebenheit,* (1936), pp. 58-85.

It was also about this time or a little later that Jakob Ammann sent out his *Warnungs-Schrift,* a short letter or broadside in which he asked all church members to report to him that they accepted his view on the three controversial issues or to prove to him that he was wrong. They were asked to do this by Feb. 20, 1694, and if they did not report by March 7 they were to be excommunicated.[124]

The second week in March, 1694, a meeting was called at the mill at Ohnenhein, in Alsace[125] at the desire of the ministers of the Palatinate,[126] at which both sides were to be present to see if it were possible to make peace. Present were ten men from Switzerland, nine of whom were ministers, and seven from the Palatinate.[127] The number of "Amish" present is not known. Here the Palatines begged the "Amish" not to continue acting so rashly. The "Amish" on the other hand insisted that the three issues of the controversy be accepted by the others. The "Amish" would not yield on any point, and neither would the Swiss who opposed them. Those from the Palatinate conceded that persons who speak falsehoods should be expelled from the church, and that no-one should teach that all true-hearted persons will be saved. But on the question of "Meidung" they would not agree with the Amish. There were also some other difficulties. Just what they were is not mentioned in the account of the meeting, but they probably concerned uniformity of dress, attendance at state churches, etc.[128] When no agreement could be reached the "Amish" left the meeting. The following day the Swiss ministers decided to agree with the Palatines after it appeared that there might be another division.[129] Then the two groups drafted a statement giving the reasons why they could not agree with Jakob Ammann and signed it. The date of this document is March 13, 1694.

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124. Ammann's *Warnungs-Schrift* is printed in *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), pp. 145, 146, and in *Verantwortung,* p. 29.

125. *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1915), p. 123, *Verantwortung,* p. 29.

126. "Hierbei haben die Pfälzer . . . auf bestimmte Zeit, einen Tag angeschlagen in Alsace," from Blank letter.

127. Uli Ammann letter, *Begebenheit,* (1906), p. 32, (1936), p. 36.

128. The reason we presume that these questions were discussed is because we know they had a part in the controversy. See Gerhardt Roosen letter, *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1909), p. 139, or *Begebenheit,* (1936), pp. 22, 23; also J. Ammann letter, *Begebenheit,* (1936), p. 77.

129. The account of the meeting is found in Uli Ammann's letter, *Begebenheit,* (1906), pp. 32, 33, (1936), pp. 36, 37.

The statement is not very lengthy and the position of the Swiss and Palatine ministers can perhaps be understood better if the full statement is given in translation.

> "A statement by us ministers and Bishops from the Palatinate and Switzerland concerning the article in which we, the undersigned, are not able to agree with Jakob Ammann. This is the reason, because he is introducing avoidance in everyday eating and drinking, taking it from I Cor. 5. Not only because he practices it himself, but all those who do not wish to confess it with him, he casts out of the congregation and paints them as untruthful, apostate sectarians, and heretical spirits. This is also the reason that we can not, neither wish to hold him and those affiliated with him as brethren and sisters. Since from our understanding of 'Meidung,' we do not confess that the apostle was writing about everyday (äusserlich) eating in I Cor. 5, but about (eating) the passover (Oster-Lamm), which is Christ offered for us. Therefore he says, 'Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven,' so therefore we confess that those who commit the vices concerning which the apostle writes, namely a person who permits himself to be called a brother, and is a fornicator and such as is described further, him should we expel, the evil one, and should not eat the bread of the remembrance of the body and blood of Christ with him, but on the other hand we should admonish him as a brother, II Thess. 2, and when he is once and then a second time admonished and does not heed the admonition, but remains apostate and a heretic, no one should listen to or accept his complaints, and should withdraw himself from him as much as is possible, and as much as serves toward his upbuilding. This is for the signature of the following ministers and bishops from Switzerland and the Palatinate.
>
> "This occurred March 13, 1694 at Ohnenheim in the mill.
>
> "The Swiss ministers and bishops are these: Hans Reist, Peter Habegger, Ulrich Falb, Niklaus Baltzli, Peter Geiger, Dursch Rohrer, Jakob Schwartz, Daniel Grimmstettler, Ulrich Baltzley. The Palatine ministers: Jakob Gut, Hans Gut, Peter Zolfinger, Christian Holi, Benedikt Mellinger, Hans Heinrich Bär, Hans Rudi Nägeli."[130]

About the same time Ammann placed most of the Palatine ministers under the ban, and also numerous persons whom he had never seen.[131] This was probably in accordance with the threat in his *Warnungs-Schrift* and is perhaps the climax in the story of the division. Now the entire community of Mennonites in southern Germany and in Switzerland was divided into two factions that were destined to remain separated for a long time. In some com-

130. The letter is printed in *Gemeinde Kalender* (1915), pp. 123, 124, and in *Verantwortung*, p. 29 (in High German).

131. Blank letter.

munities they are still distinct after nearly two hundred fifty years, and in many communities in the United States there is still no fellowship between the Amish and the other Mennonite groups. The meeting at Ohnenheim in Alsace was intended to be a peace conference, an attempt at reunion and reconciliation; but it served only to increase the bitter feeling that existed between the opposing factions.

We do not know how large a following Ammann had at this time, but from the number of ministers who signed his letter to the Palatines, we know that his following in Alsace was quite numerous. That the opposite party had perhaps a majority of the churches in the Palatinate and Switzerland we see from the lists of names on their statement of disagreement with Ammann. We know that he did not have the unanimous following of the churches in Alsace for there was a division in Markirch.[132] Jakob Gut also wrote from the Palatinate to the brotherhood in the church at Baltenheim in Alsace where they had not yet decided definitely their attitude regarding "Meidung".[133] Later there were some Amish in each of the three territories of Switzerland, Alsace, and the Palatinate.

From this time on events did not occur so rapidly and they are also not so well recorded. It is true there was considerable correspondence by interested persons, but most of it merely aggravated the trouble. A number of persons wrote their ideas on "Meidung" in letters that were circulated through the various communities. Among those who wrote on this subject were Jakob Gut, Hans Rudi Nägeli, and Jonas Lohr.[134]

The Jonas Lohr letter is an answer to Jakob Ammann's letter of Nov. 22, 1693, and is dated Aug. 28 (Herbstmonat), 1695. It appears to be written directly to Jakob Ammann. This letter, how-

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132. Jakob Ammann mentions excommunicating a number of members there. See J. Ammann letter, *Begebenheit,* (1936), pp. 76, 77. In 1697 a group of ministers, including Hans Rudi Nägeli and Rudolf Huszer wrote to Hans Reist from Markirch. See *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), p. 151, *Verantwortung,* p. 36.

133. Jakob Gut letter; *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1909), pp. 133, 134, *Begebenheit,* (1906), p. 6, (1936), p. 8.

134. See introduction to some letters, *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1909), p. 134, *Begebenheit,* (1906), pp. 5, 6, (1936), pp. 7, 8, *Verantwortung,* p. 21. This introduction says these letters were written to Jakob Ammann and his party, but the only letter, the one by Jakob Gut, that is printed in connection with this introduction was written to the "Brethren in Alsace, in the congregation at Baltenheim." The purpose of the letter is to counteract the charges that the "Amish" had made against the other side. The letter by Hans Rudi Nägely seems to be written to a friend who wanted to know about the issues. See *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1909), pp. 136-138, or *Verantwortung,* pp. 31-33. The Jonas Lohr letter printed in *Verantwortung,* pp. 29-31, is the only one of the three that appears to be written to Ammann.

ever, was circulated among the persons opposed to Ammann and it is doubtful whether he ever received it or read it before December, 1697, when he called Peter Lehman and Rudolf Huszer to him and asked to have read to him the letters they were taking through Switzerland. They read one letter by Jakob Gut that angered Ammann somewhat, and then the letter by Jonas Lohr.[135] A bitter quarrel followed in which both sides said too much. In this quarrel the question as to the ownership of a meeting house was brought up, Ammann contending that the original purchasers were on his side and the others saying that this was not true. From Ammann's reaction to the letter it is doubtful that he had ever seen it before. But even if he had, the fact that the letter was being circulated among persons of the other side would have been enough to arouse his temper.[136]

Two other letters written in 1697 may also be mentioned here. One was written to Hans Reist by Hans Rudi Nägeli and a group of ministers from Markirch, giving Reist a statement of their feelings toward the "Amish" and promising loyalty to Reist's side of the quarrel.[137] The other letter was written by Gerhardt Roosen of Hamburg to a friend in Alsace, expressing his concern for the outcome of the controversy and his reaction to a report he had received regarding Ammann's views on uniformity of dress.[138]

Besides the correspondence that took place, a number of attempts at reconciliation were made.[139] Just how many there were, and when and where the meetings were held we do not know. Sometime before or during 1698[140] the "Amish," after several other attempts had been made, decided they had been too rash with their use of the ban, not having acted with the consent of their congregations, and accordingly placed themselves under the ban. They did

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135. For evidence that it was the Jonas Lohr letter they read we find the quotation in the Lehman and Huszer letter, "Beweiset es wo hat Christus und seine Apostel eine solche Meidung im äuszerlichen Essen und Trinken geboten—". *Verantwortung,* p. 29.

136. See letter by Peter Lehman and Rudolph Huszer, in *Verantwortung,* pp. 36, 37.

137. See letter to Hans Reist, *Gemeinde Kalender* (1908), pp. 148-151, *Verantwortung,* pp. 34-36.

138. Gerhardt Roosen letter, *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1909), pp. 139-141, or *Begebenheit,* (1906), pp. 17-22, (1936), pp. 21-25.

139. Uli Ammann's letter, *Begebenheit,* (1906), pp. 36-46, (1936), pp. 40-50.

140. The year Uli Ammann's letter was supposedly written. See *Begebenheit,* (1906), p. 52, (1936), p. 57.

this expecting that those on the other side would also see their own mistakes, and in this way make reconciliation possible. But some on the other side took the attitude, "I told you that they were wrong," and seemed to rejoice in the self-humiliation of the "Amish". After a while, when the Amish indicated that they would like to be received into the church again, the other side stated they would receive them. But at this point the "Amish" insisted that the other side agree with them on "Meidung" and the other issues and that they also admit their failures. This brought the negotiations to an end.[141]

Later, after the Amish had again been received into church fellowship by ministers who had not participated in the original division[142] and several more attempts at reconciliation had been made, it began to appear that peace was possible since some on the opposite side admitted belief in "Meidung" to a certain extent.[143] But then someone mentioned the literal observance of feetwashing as the Amish practiced it. This had not been customary among the Swiss Mennonites and proved to be another barrier in the road to peace.[144]

On October 19, 1699 Jakob Gut wrote a letter in which we find that the Amish were again seeking a reconciliation. Gut advised against it because the "Amish" would not admit having placed innocent persons under the ban, and because the "Amish" accused the other side of being heretical and untruthful, and asked them to admit it.[145] On February 7, 1700, some Amish leaders again decided to put themselves under the ban, and again this failed to produce the desired peace.[146] From this point on we have no record of any more attempts to become reconciled until 1711. On January 21 of that year a group of Amish including Uli Ammann, Hans Anken, Yost Yoder, Hans Gut, Hans Güngerich, Christian Zaugg, Hans

141. Uli Ammann letter, *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 41-43, (1936), pp. 45-47.

142. "Dann sind wir wieder aufgenommen worden von Dienern, die mit den Streitgeschäft nichts zu thun hatten." *Ibid.*, (1906), p. 43, (1936), p. 47.

143. "Einer bekannte mehr, der andere weniger, und der dritte gar nichts davon, nähmlich an der leiblichen Meidung." *Begebenheit*, (1906), p. 43, (1936), p. 47.

144. Uli Ammann letter, *Begebenheit*, (1906), pp. 43, 44, (1936), pp. 47, 48.

145. Jakob Gut's letter to Peter Lehman and Rudi Huszer, in *Gemeinde Kalender*, (1915), pp. 121-123.

146. See the list of confessions, in *Gemeinde Kalender*, (1908), pp. 146-148, *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 53-55, (1936), pp. 86-88, *Verantwortung*, pp. 37-39. If this attempt is the same as mentioned in footnote 140, Uli Ammann's letter must have been written sometime in 1700 instead of 1698. See footnote 140.

Kauffmann and others from the Palatinate and the upper Palatinate came to Heidelsheim in Alsace wanting to make peace with the brotherhood there, provided they be allowed to practice "Meidung" and feetwashing. Those at Heidelsheim hesitated because of the contumely they had been subjected to by the "Amish," and wrote to the brethren in Switzerland for advice.[147] The brethren in Switzerland advised against accepting the proposal, but the brotherhood at Heidelsheim acted contrary to the advice they received and received at least Uli Ammann and Hans Gerber into fellowship.[148] This is the last recorded attempt at peacemaking, a year before various causes brought the beginning of the emigration movement that was to bring a large number of Amish and Mennonites from Switzerland and the Palatinate to North America.

147. See letter from Hans Bachman and others, *Gemeinde Kalender* (1915), p. 124, *Verantwortung,* p. 38.

148. See Christian Blank letter, *Gemeinde Kalender,* (1908), pp. 141, 142, *Begebenheit* (1906), pp. 16, 17, (1936), p. 19, *Verantwortung,* p. 25.

MENNONITE IMMIGRATION INTO MANITOBA: SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS, 1872, 1873 (Concluded)

Ernst Correll

The American University, Washington, D. C.

I was informed by Mr. Jansen (one of the most zealous) that a few days before my arrival there, he had handed to Consul Zohrab, a letter addressed to the Governor General of Canada, asking for information (referring to the report from the Minister of Militia and Defence, dated Ottawa 16th April 1872—17th Section of the Act, respecting the Militia and Defence of the D. of Canada), what is understood by saying in the above mentioned report "by which they are exempted from Military Service, when balloted in time of peace or war, **upon such conditions, and such regulations as the Government in Council may from time to time prescribe.**" This to them a very important question, was put to me for explanation from all sides, and my answer to it was, that, the guarantee offered to them in the stated report, **grants them full exemption from Military Service, in time of peace and war,** and that the words "upon such condition and regulation as the Government in Council may from time to time prescribe" only mean, that in time of war or through the results of war, they can be called upon by the Government to contribute and assist in a pecuniary measure.

Please inform me if I was correct or entitled in giving such an explanation, at the same time I promised to give them a fuller account and explanation upon this, to them, very important point, as soon as I received your reply.

I received a letter a day or two ago from one of their chief members, whom I met when there, advising me of his intended visit to the north of Germany, where there are a number of Menonites living, which in the event of their emigration, would to the greatest part follow their brethren, he proposes to meet me there, as by that time the deputation to St. Petersburgh will have returned.

I arrived here on the 17th inst., and my delay in writing to you sooner, is caused by the trying visitation, which has since my return befallen me—the death of my beloved and dutyful wife.

I have taken up my mission in Elsass and Lothringen, where apparently the flow of emigration will soon cease for the present year, but my experience has taught me, that in order to induce intending emigrants to go to a country of which they have formerly heard nothing, or very little, it is necessary to bring the advantages and inducements of such Country before them, sometime before their departure, and as there will be a large emigration by next spring from these Provinces, and I am fully convinced that the months of October, November and December are the most suitable for preparing people to choose and

select the country for their future homes, and as I was drawn from my labour in these Provinces just after I had gained knowledge of the locality and had made valuable connections at the time when you instructed me to proceed to Russia, I think I can fully earn, and doubly overtake, and bring to good account the time and money spent during the first months of my labour here. Should your views be in accordance with mine on this point, you will please give me your instructions.

John Lowe, Secretary to Department of Agriculture, to Wm. Hespeler, Special Immigration Agent. Ottawa, September 16, 1872.

Source:

ibid. Letter Book Number 6, pages 149-150.

I have the honour, under instructions of the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture, to state, in reply to your letter of the 28th August ultimo, containing a report of your visit to Berdiansk, that you can furnish to the Menonites the fullest assurance as to freedom from Military service; the 17th section of the Act 31 Vic. cap. 40 reads as follows;

[See Report of Privy Council, April 26, 1872]

Under this section all the persons above mentioned and Menonites are included, are absolutely free and exempted from Military duty, either in time of peace or of war. The Governor in Council can prescribe no conditions or regulations under which or under any circumstances these persons can be compelled to serve. The intention of the Act was, in conferring the power of making conditions and regulations on the Governor in Council to enable the Government to provide if necessary for the registration of the exempted persons in some manner so as to prevent men belonging to other Denominations than these above specified from avoiding military duty under false pretences.

John Lowe, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, to Wm. Hespeler, Special Emigration Agent. Ottawa, September 17, 1872.

Source:

ibid. Letter Book Number 6, pages 150-152.

I have the honour, under instruction of the Hon. the Min. of Agriculture to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 28th Aug. ultimo, in which you give a report of your visit to Berdiansk, and state that you found Mr. Zohrab, H. M. Consul, indisposed to give you any assistance in your mission, advising you to leave the country. I may further inform you the Department has information that active exertions are being made on behalf of the **United States** to attract the flow of Menonite emigration to that country; and that it appears a Menonite deputation has already been induced to visit Nebraska. In view of this state of things the Minister desires me to indicate to you, confidentially, the possibility of Mr. Zohrab acting in the interest of the United States, and in any future dealings you may have with him you will bear in mind this possibility.

Mr. Zohrab informed Earl Granville in his letter of 7th Feby. last that four or five thousand Mennonite families will be likely to emigrate in the course of 1873, to be speedily followed by thousands of others, and ultimately by the whole population of the Menonite colonies estimated between 60,000 and 80,000.

In order to secure the influx of this population into Canada, you are authorized to state that the Government of Canada would bring 1000 or more persons at one time from Berdiansk during the years 1873 at the same rate of fare as is now paid by passengers sailing from the Port of Liverpool to Quebec.

You are further authorized to make an arrangement with one of the leaders of the Menonites themselves, or some person among them having their confidence, in whom also you have confidence, to act as an agent of the Dominion and be remunerated for his services at the rate of $2.00 per capita for all Mennonites immigrants settling in Canada, whom he may induce to come. His immediate duty as such agent will be to diffuse information respecting the Dominion as a field for immigration, in order to direct as far as possible the stream of Menonite emigration to Canada; and to be the confidential medium of communication between the Canadian Government or its Agents in Germany and the Menonites in Russia.

The reasonable and approved outside expenses incurred by such agent in the performance of his duties, will be paid by the Canadian Government to an extent to be hereafter arranged.

In the event of the refusal of the Russian Government in October next, to meet the Menonites demands, you will be expected to exert yourself to the utmost to secure to Canada the emigration which will be the consequence of that refusal, not only by the means herein indicated, but by any other which you can suggest which can be taken by the Canadian Government.

You will please communicate by telegraph or otherwise so as to secure the utmost promptness of action.

Report of the Committee of the Privy Council approved by the Governor General, September 25, 1872.

Source:

Public Archives of Canada, Dept. of Agriculture, General Correspondence, No. 6897.

[Incomplete reprint and German translation in *Wichtige Dokumente bebreffs der Wehrfreiheit der Mennoniten in Canada*, Selbstverlag der Canadischen Mennonitengemeinden, Gretna, Manitoba, 1917]

The Committee of Council has under consideration a despatch from the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated August 23rd ultimo, covering a letter from Mr. Zohrab, Her Majesty's Consul at Berdiansk, dated July 26th last, and a letter from Mr. Cornelius Janzen of Berdiansk, dated June last; addressed to Your Excellency.

The Hon. the Minister of Agriculture, to whom the above despatch and enclosures were referred, reports that it is expedient to give the German Mennonites in Russia the fullest Assurances of absolute immu-

nity from military service if they settle in Canada.

That a sub-section of Section 171, of the Act 31 Victoria, chapter 40, is as follows:

> "Any Person bearing a certificate from the Society of Quakers, Mennonites or Tunkers, or any inhabitant of Canada of any religious denomination, otherwise subject to military duty, but who, from the doctrines of his religion, is averse to bearing arms and refuses personal military service, shall be exempted from such service when balloted in time of peace, or war, upon such conditions and under such regulations as the Governor in Council may from time to time prescribe."

That under this section all the persons above mentioned, and the Mennonites are expressly included, are absolutely free and exempted by the law of Canada, from military duty or service, either in time of peace or war.

That the Governor General in Council cannot prescribe any conditions or regulations under which under any circumstances the persons referred to in the above quoted section can be compelled to render any military service.

That the intention of the Act in conferring upon the Governor General in Council the Power of making conditions and regulations was to enable the Government to provide, if necessary, for the registration of the exempted persons in such a manner as to prevent persons belonging to any other denominations than those specified in the section of the Act above quoted from avoiding military duty under false pretences.

That the constitution does not confer upon the Governor General in Council any power to over-ride or set aside, under any circumstances, the plain meaning of statute law, and he recommends that this explanation be conveyed to the Mennonites in Russia.

The Committee concur in the foregoing report, and advise that a copy of this Minute be transmitted by Your Excellency to the Earl of Kimberly.

Wm. Hespeler, Emigration Agent, to J. H. Pope, Minister of Agriculture, Ottawa. Strassburg, Germany, Oct. 21, 1872.

Source:

ibid. No. 7150.

I am in receipt of Mr. Lowe's letter of the 16th of last month, through which I am glad to find, that the Russian Menonite move is by you so well understood, and your decision, according to my experience well directed.

Just at the time I am anxiously waiting to hear from Russia, as regards the Menonite deputation, meeting the Emperor at Livadia (?) on his way from Berlin to St. Petersburg.

On the receipt of your authorization, I telegraphed (as letters take from 10 to 12 days) to one of their most energetic and leading Elders, asking him, if they had decided upon leaving their present homes and if so, whether I could meet one or some of them, in the North of Germany, where they thought visiting their brethern—the reply was:

that they would not meet in Germany until December, but they would be very glad if they could meet me in Russia as they were holding meetings, and any further propositions to assist them would be thankfully received. They also say, that they will inform me of the resolutions of their meetings, and yesterday I received a telegram, asking me if I could meet them the latter end of this, or the beginning of next month. I replied that they should appoint the day and select a place at some town on the Black Sea, to which message I have not yet received a reply, to Berdiansk I dare not go, on account of the Police, and the English Consul, the latter I fear is under the influence of what you suspect.

There is no doubt in my mind, but that the Menonites got the Emperor's refusal, and consequently they will leave their homes and country.

The deputation, you speak of, they sent to the United States, was not sent off by the Parishes—they were the sons of three large agriculturists (Menonites) who went to see the country, on their own expenses, and while I was amongst them last summer, during the very time their young men were in America, I called at their places, and begged the parents to instruct their sons to visit Canada also,—they promised me that they should do so, if time would permit, as time seemed to be the only objection. I proposed for them to visit Ontario, which was easier to be reached than Manitoba or Quebec, and where they would find like in the United States, a large number of their own confessionalists, which all, speak some kind of a German, and for this purpose I gave them a letter of introduction to Mr. Springer, M.P. for Waterloo, who speaks some German—and a week or so ago I heard from a friend of mine residing in the same county, that people from Russia had been there, so I think it must have been them. The people in Russia have not mentioned about it, but I have no doubt they will have returned home by this time, as they were expected home in October. I fear the proposition to appoint an Agent from amongst them (and such a one would make the best agent) with a remuneration of $2 per capita for all Menonites immigrating and settling in Canada, would not create a very favourable effect, neither would the Agency be accepted by any of them in that way, as according to my experience of them, I find them more conscientious than their confessionalists in Canada or the U. States,—it would in their eyes look too much like dealing in human beings, but if a moderate salary was offered to a good man, which cannot amount to much, I think that the most advantageous in every respect, as I have every reason to hope that a very large number will go to Canada.

They are not a people like the general run of emigrants—they are a reasoning, thinking, cautious and to a large extent an educated people. Sending ships to the Black Sea, will undoubtedly be the most inducing and most favourable point. I shall use my utmost exertions in every respect, and from my part, nothing will be left undone to accomplish the greatest results, to the best of my knowledge and ability. On the receipt of their telegram, I will start immediately. Since the 1st of this month the German Government has withdrawn the Concessions from all the Emigration Steamship Agencies in Elsass and Loth-

ringen, as the French laws since the 1st inst. have ceased to exist, and the German Emig. Law not yet having passed the House, will not come in force before New-Year—therefore there cannot be done any work at all here, by any Canadian Government or any other Agent; and what will follow after New-Years is very uncertain. . . .
I will inform you of all particulars, of my Russian mission without delay.

John Lowe, Secretary to Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, to F. J. Bradley, North Pembina. October 31, 1872.

Source:

ibid. Department of Agriculture, Letter Book No. 6, pages 211-212.

. . . a delegation of Mennonites from Southern Russia are about visiting Manitoba with a view to ascertain its capabilities as a field for a large Mennonite Immigration and you will please afford them all the information and facilities in your power for furthering the object of their visit.

[Same, *ibid.*, to G. McMicken, Dominion Crown Land Agent, Fort Gary, asking the latter to place delegation in communication with Wm. Wagner, Provincial Land Surveyor at present in Manitoba.]

[In a noteworthy letter to the Minister of Agriculture (Aug. 9, 1872, *ibid.* 6643) Wagner described the fertility of soil in Manitoba and its particular adaptability for German immigration. Reference is made to his German report for the "German Benevolent Society of Montreal" later published by the Ministry of Agriculture as a guide for immigrants. So far he brought out 4 families through this Society. "Knowing the peculiarities of German settlers who prefer to live together" he desires to be introduced to the Dominion Crown Land Agent at Winnipeg so as to select and reserve a township for a German settlement.]

British Consul General K. E. Abbott to Lord A. Loftus, Odessa, Russia, Nov. 6, 1872.

Source:

ibid. Dept. of Agriculture, General Correspondence, 7562.

There is arrived here a Canadian gentleman named Hespeler who called upon me yesterday, asking me to give him my opinion on the following subject.

He stated that he was sent by the Government of Canada as Agent in this Country for the removal of German Colonists of Mennonites (a kind of Quaker community) dwelling in the Crimea and on the Azoff, who to avoid the law of Conscription now applicable to them, have made overtures to the Government of Canada to receive them as settlers, the Russian Government they say having broken faith with them in the promise originally made, that they should be exempt from Military service. Mr. Hespeler stated that the number of this people is considerable, and that the Canadian Government is ready to despatch

steamers for them. He enquired whether I thought he would be molested or prevented from carrying out the duty for which he is sent, and if so whether I could point out any course to be pursued by him.

I replied that I thought the authorities would probably not interfere directly with himself, but that it would be impossible to carry out any plan of the kind until it had been fully settled at St. Petersburgh that the people might emigrate, that his agency here would be simply ignored, and that if he mooted the question it would only be referred to St. Petersburgh whence he might never get an answer. He said that free permission had been given to the people to depart, but I presume such an emigration **en masse** was never contemplated as probable.

Mr. Hespeler said that my opinion agreed exactly with his own, and with what he had written to his Government and that he had recommended an application being made by the latter through H. M's Government to the Emperor.

I believe he returns today on his way back to Canada.

Memorandum of Consul Zohrab, submitted to Foreign Office in London. Berdiansk, Russia, Nov. 7, 1872.

Source:

ibid.

(Should emigration be favored or discouraged? Is aware that no offence should be given to Russia. Wants to know confidentially what the views of Foreign Office are? Previous instructions were to be neutral—should neutrality be carried to point of discouraging emigration? Is acquisition of this group important enough to prevent their being absorbed by the United States? In case emigration is decided and permission given would it be prudent to influence the Mennonites to go to Canada?)

Lord Loftus to Earl Granville, St. Petersburgh, Nov. 11, 1872.

Source:

ibid.

[As Zohrab already instructed, his suggestions now of no use—considers Mennonites now fully informed]

"I must express to your Lordship my opinion that it was in the first instance imprudent—on the part of the Canadian Government to send a special agent, Mr. Hespeler, to Berdiansk to place himself in communication with the Mennonites for the purpose of inducing them to emigrate to Canada; and I am further of opinion, that the suggestions contained in the memorandum of the Canadian Minister of Agriculture, if acted upon previous to the sanction of the Russian Government being given to the Mennonites to emigrate, may give rise to complications with the Imperial Government."

[On inquiry finds U. S. has refused to enter into communication despite repeated solicitations until permission to leave is granted—inquiries **re** military service have not been answered by U. S.]

[As previously stated Canada should be passive until permission to leave is granted. Until then anyone seeking to induce them to leave is subject to penalties]

Wm. Hespeler, Special Emigration Agent, to J. H. Pope, Minister of Agriculture, Ottawa. Strassburg, Germany, November 25, 1872.

Source:

ibid. No. 7365.

According to a telegram I had received from Russia, I left this place on the 28th ult. to meet the expected deputation at Kertsch on the Black Sea—the deputation consisted of three members, one from Berdiansk and the two others from two different colonies, one of the latter had visited the United States and Canada (Waterloo Cty.) last summer and is one of those three to which my letters of introduction were forwarded by their friends, but unfortunately they only reached them after they had left Canada, but, however, I am glad to say, the results of their short visit to Canada proved most favourable, they had letters from friends in Pennsylvannia to friends in Canada (Waterloo Cty.) and he the one of the party told me, that Canada (as far as they had seen it) the people, their habits, along with its general system and appearing prosperity, has impressed them with a higher opinion of that Province than of any state in the Union, they had visited during their travels, and this report coming from one of their own made a very favourable impression.

I delivered your assurance as to freedom from Military Service, of which I made a translation in German, I gave them a number of copies for circulation, and I am glad to say the deputation expressed themselves fully satisfied upon that point.

Your favourable resolution to send ships for them to the Black Sea was thankfully received; such assistance alone promises to secure the greatest ultimate success, but summing up all circumstances which my conferences with the deputation has brought to light, I think, that next summer emigration will not guarantee a sufficient number of families for the proposed undertaking, as in all, there can not be over 50 families which will be in a position, and are now preparing for emigrating next summer, amongst them, are half the number belonging to Lutheran and Reform Colonies, which to visit, I made it my duty, this time there I found, that the number of those Colonists is even greater than the Menonites, and equally as determined to leave their present prosperous homes, as soon as they are fully convinced that the Russian Government will carry out that part of the new Ukase which will interfere with their religious freedom, and the new Military law, which will make the service obligatory, and comes in force in 1873, but will not compel the Germans, or any other colonists to serve before 1880. Those families which are preparing for emigrating next summer are all proprietors, which have lost all confidence in any promises that might hereafter be made by the Russian Govt., they are people of means and can afford to undertake the land voyage from their homes to any of the Atlantic Seaports, of which the largest number intend going to Canada. To see those people rightly placed, on and after their arrival there, will be of the very greatest importance, as their reports,

will either bring or keep away the great masses, which must eventually follow them.

I have endeavoured to treat with those people on the soundest and most sincere principles, and they have every confidence in the Canadian Government, and also, of which I feel proud, in my own statements which I have tried to give most conscientiously. I have made a large number of personal friends amongst them, and I shall at all times take the deepest of interest in their wellfare.

As regards embarking the people at some point on the Black Sea, I made the fullest enquiries, which will as far as I am able to judge, be met with the greatest of difficulties, as the Russian Govt. will most certainly prevent any outside assistance for the purpose of taking those, their most valuable agriculturists from their soil—they will not allow any office or station to be opened for that purpose, neither will they submit to any person travelling or canvassing the Colonies for any such intention, and the only possible chance that I can see for obtaining such concession, might be through the British Government, and even that attempt may result fruitless, and without it, the whole movement cannot be quited (?) neither successful. If the Russian Govt. will not permit an Agent within their territory, I can see no other resource, than to send the ships to Constantinople, and my plans to accomplish the embarkment from there, if necessary, and adopted by you, will I think accomplish the purpose; also the deputation I met, fully agree with me on this point. None of their people would accept any Agency in Russia, without a proper concession from the St. Petersburg Government, neither would it be advisable for any body to make such an attempt. The Government will not prevent the Colonists to emigrate, but at the same time, they will prevent with a strong hand, any move towards the slightest assistance. I called on the British Consul General at Odessa, whose opinion on this question I found to agree with mine. I have also made the acquaintance of a Missionary who has travelled through those Colonies for nearly thirty years, and his assistance has proved of great service to me.

I informed you several months ago that the Menonites were promised an audience at St. Petersburg in October—according, they started at the time mentioned, but on their arrival there, they were told, that nothing could be done, as the Emperor was absent—on their return home, they found that the Emperor, at the time, was visiting their vicinity, (the south coast of the Black Sea) and so they made two attempts to get an audience, but both times it resulted in a disappointment, and at the last, just at the time I was amongst them, they were told to come to St. Petersburg again in the middle of December—this will be their last attempt, and will only be carried out to satisfy the minds of the great number, which adhere to hopes, but at any rate, it will create a general decision among them.

One or two of their leading men intend visiting their brethern in Prussia immediately after the deputation returns from St. Petersburg, and they have asked me to meet them there also. I have promised to do so, if it can be on or before New-Years, as I shall have to return to Canada right after New-Years, unless you should request it sooner, in the meantime, I shall visit a locality in the neighbouring Grand-Duchy

of Baden, where there are a number of people intending to emigrate next spring, as nothing can be done here in Elsass and Lothringen for the present.

If you should think it desirable to attempt the Russian Govt. for the concession of opening an office it may be of some importance to explain to the foreign office in London what would be desirable, and your instructions could be given to me through Mr. Dixon, also, to see the Allan's at Liverpool, should you think engaging their vessels to or near the Black Sea, at any rate there might be no harm in exchanging views. There have not been any agents from the United States amongst the Menonites in Russia as yet, but they constantly receive letters from friends residing there.

Their leading parties kept me regularly informed, and no move will take place without my receiving due notice of it.

The proposition I made to them last summer, according to your direction, to send a deputation to Canada next Spring, will be taken advantage of, and particulars I will be informed of, most likely before I leave the continent.

Jacob Y. Shantz to the Minister of Agriculture, Winnipeg, Nov. 28, 1872.

Source:

Ibid. 7388.

(Returned from a 200 miles trip through Manitoba with his Russian friend Warkentin accompanied by the Land Surveyors Wagner and Hart. Astonished to find the country so much settled and cultivated. Crops very good. Vegetables (turnips, potatoes, onions) perfect. Soil and climate good, although cold, long winters. Warkentin also likes the country, "as you will see on his own letter" (not found E. C.). Continued on Nov. 30 after trip through "Old Settlement":

(Saw fine farms.) "Would you wish that I should make a report in German. If so write to Berlin. Germans are scattered all through the Western states . . . from all parts of Germany . . . have no knowledge of the Northwest . . . there is a great prejudice by their friends in the states against the country being too cold, also by a great many against the Hudson Bay Co which I think is an advantage to the settlers. Another against the natives (half-breeds) which I also think are an advantage because there is enough land besides their Reserves and just as good, and they are not much of farmers, therefore settlers can get them to work."

"Another preference we have over the Western states is our good land extends so much further and is so much larger so we have also this advantage of immigration so much more and longer. Another advantage is that the settler can get their land wherever he wishes and in the states the railway companies have from 10 to 20 miles on each side of the road which they sell according to location and value from 2 to 10 dollars per acre and their free grants are always far back."

Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office, to Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office, London, Nov. 30, 1872.

Source:

Ibid. 7434.

(Acknowledges receipt of letter of Nov. 19 enclosing copy of Consul Zohrab's request for instructions)

. . . inform Earl Granville that Lord Kimberly is of opinion that Mr. Zohrab might be instructed confidentially that he is required to maintain a neutral attitude in order that the Russian Government may have no cause to complain that British influence is exercised to induce the Mennonites to quit Russia; that the Canadian Government being (as he is aware) very desirous that the Mennonites should proceed to Canada if they determine to emigrate and that he should, if the Russian Government give official permission to the Mennonites to leave Russia encourage them to select Canada by affording them every information in his power as to the advantages offered by the Dominion to emigrants.

John Lowe, Secretary to Department of Agriculture, to Wm. Hespeler, Special Emigration Agent, December 10, 1872.

Source:

Ibid. Letter Book Number 6, page 250.

I have the honor, under instructions of the Minister of Agriculture, to inform you that the Canadian Government is advised by the Government of Her Majesty, it is not expedient that anything further should be done at present in respect to the emigration of the Menonites from Russia, in order to avoid complications with the Government of the Czar.

I am, therefore, to state to you that you are not to continue the efforts you were instructed to make in my letter to you of Sept. 17 last; and to request that you will, immediately on receipt of this, return to Canada.

British Foreign Office to Consul Zohrab. Dec. 13, 1872.

Source:

Ibid.

(refers to Zohrab memo of Nov. 7 and consequent correspondence between Colonial Office and Foreign Office—instructs him to maintain a neutral attitude so Russia cannot complain of British influence. In case Russia gives permission to leave Russia he should encourage the Mennonites to go to Canada by affording them all information **re** advantages offered to emigrants by the Dominion.)

British Foreign Office, to Colonial Office, Dec. 13, 1872.

Source:

Ibid.

"It appears from the quotation from Mr. Hespeler's report of October 21st that he has been in open communication with the Mennonite

Chiefs in Russia with a view of persuading them to leave the country, and I am to request you to state to the Earl of Kimberly that Lord Granville cannot but consider that such a line of conduct on Mr. Hespeler's part, while the permission to emigrate has not been granted to the Mennonites, is liable to create inconvenient discussions between H. M.'s Government and the Government of Russia.

Lord Granville would accordingly suggest that Mr. Hespeler should be urged to use the greatest prudence in this matter, and even that all communication with the Mennonites should be suspended till the permission to emigrate has been granted."

John Lowe, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, January 23rd, 1873, to Jacob Y. Shantz, Berlin, Ontario.

Source:

ibid. Letter Book Number 6, page 285.

I have authority from the Minister of Agriculture to state to you in reference to the enquiry contained in your letter to me that if 1000 of the Menonites desire to settle in Manitoba he will undertake their conveyance at a rate of $40.00 per adult from Berdiansk to Manitoba. But the whole 1000 must be ready to move together. If this offer is accepted the Department should be notified in time to make the necessary arrangements.

Wm. Hespeler. Special Emigration Agent to J. H. Pope. Minister of Agriculture, Ottawa. Waterloo, Ont. March 1st, 1873.

Source:

Ibid. No. 8005.

. . . . . Being in possession of the names of two Menonites residing in Berdiansk Mesrs (?) Jansen and Buller I was determined not to leave the country without having called upon them, and thanks for their many kindnesses bestowed upon me; they gave me the best of information, pointed out how to avoid danger and have intercourse with the Menonite Colonies, with the least possible risk of being detected by the authorities.

I consequently left Berdiansk at once, starting in a north westerly direction for the interior, and after a two days journey, accompanied by Mr. Buller, I reached the first Colony, having travelled over the Steppes and through villages settled by natives living in mud huts, to the number of from two to four thousand souls in each village, but finding that the cholera was very bad amongst them, and in fear of raising suspicion at the Passport Stations, I in future avoided travelling through those places, and took to the byways. I travelled from Colony to Colony (in all six) most accompanied by one of the Menonites, calling upon all leading members, and on as many other as was prudent, avoiding suspicion with the authorities.

The number of German Menonites living in the South of Russia is estimated from eighty to one hundred thousand souls, of which number, it can be fairly counted, that seven eighths will eventually emigrate, and the cause of their leaving their present homes, is on account of the

Russian Government withdrawing their personal and religious privileges they have hitherto enjoyed as Colonists, of which the new obligatory Military Service imposed upon all Russian subjects, without exception, is the most effectual.

A period of ten years has been granted by the Ukase to the German Menonites, giving them the choice to submit to the changes or leave the country during that time.

These people began emigrating from Germany to Russia in the year 1800, and from that time there was a yearly immigration up to about 1850. Each family on entering was given sixty five (65) dissatines—(175 acres) of land, free of charge, and as they are a hard-working sober, moral and intelligent people, a great number have accumulated large means, and are owners of from ten to fourteen thousand acres of land, which they apply partly to the growing of grain and stock raising. They are superior agriculturists, occupy excellent dwellings and have good farm buildings, all erected of brick. In their towns, which excel in order and cleanliness, I found prosperous merchants, manufacturers and mechanics.

They duly acknowledged the inducements held out to them by the Canadian Government, which you entrusted to me to deliver. The assurance of an entire exemption from all Military Service, the free grant of 160 acres of land to each male adult, and the promise of establishing a line of steamers to the Black Sea, to afford them a cheap and direct voyage, has secured a strong desire to avail themselves of your offers, and they are now disposed to give **Canada** a preference over the neighbouring States, should the deputation I invited to visit Canada find the Country otherwise advantageous, and I have no doubt but what an immense emigration will flow to this Country, consisting possibly of the very best class of immigrants that can come into a new country.

Before leaving Russia I visited a number of other Countries in **Bessarabia, Cherson** and the Crimea settled by German Lutherans in all, numbering over one hundred thousand souls, but there my movements were harrassed, by the watchfulness of the Police, and so much so, that I had to restrict my intercourse to a very limited number. I found that those people are equally desirous to emigrate, and with proper facilities for their conveyance to this Country, the bulk of those Colonies will in all probability follow the Menonites.

In the face of the Russian Government refusing the opening of Emigration Steamship offices in their Country, which will render the direct removal of emigrants from Russian Ports impossible, it will be necessary to establish a central bureau at some place (neutral port) on the **Black Sea,** on some such plan as already suggested by me.

Since I left Russia I have kept up correspondence with several leading Menonites, and with two of the principal parties living in the last named Colonies, and they state that a general emigration movement is on foot, and that they are about electing their deputation, which will come out this Spring to look at the country and that there is no doubt, but what the Lutheran Germans will follow the Menonites.

My impression since leaving Russia is; that if the delegates are

pleased with Manitoba, that a large influx of these people will flow in, provided the means of transport is made easy, permanent and direct.

I am weekly, expecting letters informing me of their (the deputation) departure from Russia, and upon their arrival I will advise you.

John Lowe, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, March 12th, 1873 to Wm. Hespeler, Waterloo, Ontario.

Source:

Ibid. Letter Book Number 7, page 28.

I have the honor, under instruction of the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture, to inform you that an Order in Council was passed on the 3rd instant, reserving for the exclusive use, by settlement, of Germans in Russia, Menonites and others the following townships in the Province of Manitoba.

Township 4 in the 6th Range East
" 6 in ranges 5 and 6 East
" 5 " " " " " "

Should any parts of these townships be already sold or occupied, they are, of course, in so far, excepted from the reservation.

"The Manitoban," Winnipeg, Province of Manitoba, Saturday, March 22, 1873. Volume III No. 12, Whole No. 116.

Immigration from Russia

Last evening we had the pleasure of an interview with William Hespeler, Esq., of Waterloo, Emigration Commissioner to Russia. He gives very favorable accounts of his mission. He left here last April, and proceeded to the German settlements on the south side of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azof, where there are over 200,000 inhabitants anxious to emigrate. These people are mostly Mennonites. Their forefathers left Germany about eighty years ago, and settled in the localities above described, with the understanding from the Russian Government that they should be left free from religious, municipal, and military restrictions. The present government has withdrawn these privileges and given them permission either to leave the country within ten years or be subject to all the laws of the country, as other subjects. Mr. Hespeler has made arrangements to have eight townships set apart in Manitoba for these people, where they can form a "colony". In the Spring four representatives will come out to Canada to learn the manners and customs of our people, as well as the topography and resources of the country, which they will report to their countrymen—

Wm. Hespeler, Emigration Agent, to J. H. Pope, Minister of Agriculture, Waterloo, April 26, 1873.

Source:

Ibid. Department of Agriculture Papers, General Correspondence 8138.

I am in receipt of yours of the 21st inst.

The points I referred to in my last letter regarding the immigration from Russia, and which according to my judgment should be settled upon before the arrival of the next Delegation are consisting of a number of Questions which the Delegates already here, have put before me.

The answers, as also the inducements offered by your Government, they expect to receive in shape of a written Document direct from the Government, confirming the statements I verbally delivered to them last summer.

As the next Delegation is coming out via New York towards the middle or latter part of next month (May) I think it of the greatest importance, to have such Document ready on there arrival, showing the earnestness of your Government especially as I expect some 20 families coming out with them, who, as I have every reason to suspect will also be met on their arrival by some American agents, and therefore every effort should be made to over balance the inducements they can bring before them. I therefore beg to propose that you should furnish me with credentials drawn out by you in a manner (signed & sealed) as they are in the habit of seeing such—stating the precise conditions the Canadian Govt. has determined upon—and it should be about as follows, stating first.

1. The exemption from military service.

2. The reserve of the townships in the Province of Manitoba as passed by order in Council on the 3 th of March, 1873.

3. The free grant of ¼ section—160 Acres to actual settlers over twenty one years of age, and the right to purchase ¾ section additional, from the Government at the price fixed upon in the Dominion Lands Act.

4. Patents granted for free grants after having been settled upon for three years and the right to sell again after having fulfilled settlement duties.

5. The issue of Patent as stated in No. 11 "when parents die without divising" as in No. 12 in Paragraph 33 under homestead rights on free grant lands—Dominion Lands Act.

6. The privilege of exercising their religious principles according to their Denomination—also the same as regards religious instructions in their schools.

7. Privilege of affirming in place of making affidavits.

8. Stating the offers your Government is prepared to make for bringing them out to this Country.

In regard to the last question I see serious difficulties first, that the Russian Government will put obstacles in the way to ship the emigrants from their ports direct. Secondly, that the shipping from any of the neighboring neutral ports, may meet with many obstructions, on account of Cholera which invariably prevails there during the summer months, and which necessitates quarantine to all neutral ports, and should these difficulties not exist, I see that great delays would arise in congregating a sufficient number at a neutral port to make a full cargo

for an Ocean Steamer—My suggestion would be to make arrangements with the different Railway Companies from the Black Sea to one of the German Seaports, and then offer the Emigrants passage at a fixed reduced rate from Odessa to Quebec or better, to Manitoba providing the Russian Government can be induced to allow such passage tickets to be issued and I think such a concession could be obtained if rightly gone about. However this question how to bring them out ought to be arrived at and positively stated. There may be questions in connection with this proposition to which I might be able to give you a fuller explanation if you think favourably of it. At any rate the time is very short as I am advised that the Delegation will leave their homes between the 24th and 28th inst. Some of the suggestions that I have recommended to your consideration may appear unnecessary to you, as the replies to some of them are given in the general Statutes and in the Dominion Lands Act, but knowing the people they are intended to be submitted to, and understanding the value they place in some simple points, I consider it good policy to state the offers in the way I propose as I know they will be asked for before they leave this country.

John Lowe, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, May 21st, 1873 to Wm. Hespeler, Waterloo, Ontario.

Source:

Ibid. Letter Book Number 7, pages 97 and 98.

I have the honour, under instruction of the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture to request that you will accompany the delegation of Menonites about to visit this country, to Manitoba, for the purpose of showing to them the country, and generally informing them in the sense of your previous instructions and the Orders in Council which have been communicated to you in this matter.

The Department under the authority of an Order in Council has undertaken to pay the expenses of two of the Menonites' delegation. An advance will be made on account, or payment made when the accounts are sent in, as may be found convenient. You will please advise the Department on this point.

The Minister authorizes me to state to you that he desires you to request Mr. J. Y. Shantz of Berlin, Ont. also to accompany the Menonite delegation to Manitoba. He is of opinion that Mr. Shantz' experience arising from his former visit and intercourse with the Menonites will be found useful.

An advance of $400.00 is herewith remitted to you on account of your expenses.

John Lowe, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, July 3, 1873 to J. Schneider, Ottawa.

Source:

Ibid. Letter Book Number 7, pages 148 and 149.

I have the honor, under instruction of the Hon. the Min. of Agric. to inform you that you have been appointed an Agent of this Department in Germany with authority to proceed to the Southern Province of Russia, if you find facilities to do so, for a period of three months to date from Monday next the 7th instant.

I am now to instruct you to proceed immediately to Germany; and to state to you that your particular duties will be to take such steps, acting in the particular manner explained to you by the Minister as may be likely to lead to the Immigration to Canada of the German Lutherans now settled in Russia, who it is understood desire to leave with the Menonites.

The Minister understands that you cannot act in Russia as an Immigration Agent, and you cannot therefore assume that position in any Russian Province. But it is believed that communication may be freely had with the Lutherans and Menonites through their correspondents in Germany.

A free grant of 160 acres of land will be made to each adult over 21 years in the Province of Manitoba, or other parts of the North West Territory; and a further quantity, not, however, exceeding in all 640 acres to each individual will be sold at the price of $1.00 per acre.

For information as to the quality of the land and the nature of the climate of the North West Territories, I refer you to the printed paper published by the German Society of Montreal, principally based on reports to them of Mr. Wagner and the pamphlet of Mr. Schantz.

You can obtain copies of the paper of the German Society from Mr. Klotz at Hamburg and copies of the pamphlet of Mr. Schantz will be forwarded as soon as printed in German.

A DEFENSE OF THE ANCIENT MENNONITE PRINCIPLE OF NON-RESISTANCE BY A LEADING PRUSSIAN MENNONITE ELDER IN 1873

Being an Epistle by Wilhelm Ewert,

first published in the *Mennonitische Blätter,* (Germany), in 1873

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The epistle by Elder Wilhelm Ewert of West Prussia, which is reproduced below, is one of the most vigorous and effective defenses of the principle of non-resistance ever written by a European Mennonite leader. It is a reply to an article favoring the acceptance of military service by German Mennonites, which was written by the editor of the *Mennonitische Blätter,* Pastor Jacob Mannhardt of Danzig, and appeared in that journal in 1872. Mannhardt had urged those who differed with him as well as others to express themselves in the columns of his journal. Elder Ewert took up the challenge. In doing so he gave expression to the conviction of a considerable group of Prussian Mennonites who were unwilling to abandon the faith of their fathers on the principle of non-resistance, merely because the Prussian state was making it difficult for Mennonites to escape military service. The issue had become acute in 1867 and continued to agitate the Mennonites of Prussia during the immediately following years, particularly after the creation of the new German empire in 1870. The ultimate outcome was the emigration of a considerable number of Prussian Mennonites to the United States of America (Kansas and Nebraska) where military service was not required.

Wilhelm Ewert, the author of the epistle, was born on February 23, 1829 at Strauske bei Thorn, West Prussia of an old Mennonite family. In 1860 he was ordained minister, and in 1867 elder of his home church. In 1870 he was sent to Russia as a member of a delegation representing Prussian Mennonites who sought a location for colonization in Russia to escape the new Prussian military laws. In the spring and summer of 1873, together with the delegates of the Mennonite churches of Russia, he made a trip of investigation to the United States to explore the possibilities of colonization in America. He was in America at the time his article appeared in Mannhardt's journal. In the following year, 1874, elder Ewert, together with a group of Prussian Mennonites emigrated to America. He settled in Marion County, Kansas where he organized the Bruderthal Church of which he remained the elder until his untimely death June 21, 1887. One of his thirteen children, a son H. H. Ewert, became a noted Mennonite educator, and was for many years the principal of the Mennonite Collegiate Institute at Gretna, Manitoba, Canada.

The document herewith published throws light on the causes of the Mennonite emigration from Prussia and Russia of 1874-75 to the prairie states of the American middle west. It also may have some bearing on the present controversy which has arisen in certain immigrant Mennonite circles in western Canada, as reflecting the earlier position of the Mennonite church.

Erwiderung auf den Aufsatz in Nr 6, 7, 8, 9 der Mennonitischen Blaetter, Jahrgang 1872, "Koennen und duerfen wir Mennoniten der vom Staate geforderten Wehrpflicht genuegen".

Der Verfasser besagtes Aufsatzes war so entgegenkommend, am Schlusse desselben die Aufforderung auszusprechen dasz sich auch andere Brueder ueber diesen wichtigen Gegenstand äuszern moechten. Schon sind mehrere Nummer der Mennonitischen Blaettern erschienen; und noch ist bis jetzt von Niemand eine zustimmende oder widersprechende Äuszerung geschehen, so dasz es fast den Anschein hat als waeren alle Mennoniten mit dem Herausgeber gleicher Anschauung; dieses ist doch bei weitem nicht der Fall.

Die Mehrzahl der Mennoniten hat sich zwar dem Militärgesetze gefügt, aber doch nur in so weit als sie meinen, dasz dieses sie nicht zum Blutvergieszen und zum Tödten des Nebenmenschen ver anlaszt; ein Häuflein ist auch noch vorhanden, die aus dem klaren Worte des Herrn die Ueberzeugung haben, dasz das Kriegführen mit der Nachfolge des sanftmüthigen und demüthigen Heilandes, der gekommen ist, der Menschen Seelen zu erhalten und nicht zu verderben, sich so wenig vereinigen läszt, als Christus und Belial, und die daher auch selbst die vom Könige uns gestattete mildere Form des Kriegdienstes nicht übernehmen können, weil auch selbst zu diesen Diensten die Heerespflichtigen durch den Militäreid, und das Tragen von Kriegswaffen der Kriegsmacht incorporirt werden müssen; diese Letzteren sind auch bereit, eher Alles zu verlassen und Alles zu dulden, als dasz sie von den Fusztapfen ihres Heilandes weichen sollten.

. . . Wenn ich mich also gedrungen fühle, die christliche Wehrlosigkeit zu rechtfertigen, so geschieht dieses nicht für die sogenannte Christenheit, oder speciell für das sogenannte Mennonitenthum, dem sie durch Privilegium gesichert war, die aber in ihrer groszen Gesammtheit, sich der Welt gleichstellen, und meistens nur in so weit dem Worte des Herrn unterthan sind, als es nicht irdische Verluste, Schmach, Verleugnung und Leiden von ihnen fordert; sondern meine Worte sollen nur denen gelten, die auf sich den Ausspruch in Colosser 3, 3: "Ihr seid gestorben, und Euer Leben ist verborgen mit Christo in Gott", in Wahrheit deuten können, die es nicht nur als ein leeres Gerede ansehen, dasz sie bekannten, dasz sie sich deshalb der Gemeinschaft der Gläubigen anschlieszen und sich taufen lassen wollten, weil sie sich gedrungen fühlten, von der Welt und deren sündlichen Lüsten sich abzusondern, und sich dem Gehorsam ihres Herrn, Erlösers und Seligmachers zu untergeben zu ihrer Seligkeit, sondern die sich auch betrachten als Glieder des heiligen Leibes Christi, und sich verpflichtet fühlen zu verkündigen die Tugenden des, der sie berufen hat von der Finsternisz zu seinem wunderbaren Lichte, die dafür halten, sobald eine christliche Gemeinde das Princip eine Gemeinde der Heiligen zu

sein aufgegeben hat, auch aufhören musz, sich eine christliche Gemeinde zu nennen. Der Herausgeber bezeichnet dieses selbst als ein im Geist und Buchstaben der Schrift begründetes hohes Ideal, das den Vätern unseres Bekenntnisses vorschwebte. Nicht als Ideal schwebte es ihnen vor, sondern als Grundbedingung des Christenthums hielten sie es fest, eben weil dies im Worte des Herrn und seiner Apostel so vielseitige Begründung findet. Dasz unsere Gemeinden schon lange nicht mehr sind, was sie sein sollen, damit stimme ich sehr mit dem Herausgeber überein, und glaube auch, dasz dieser gegenwärtige Zustand gar nicht ausbleiben konnte, seitdem unsere Bekenntnisz-Genossen sich durch das Privilegium, aus Kreuzesfurcht auf ein gewisses Flächenmaasz, oder eine gewisse Seelenzahl einschränken, und daher auch bestimmen lieszen, das Licht der wahren Jüngerschaft Christi unter den Scheffel zu stellen, und aufzuhören, auf Werbung um Seelen für das Friedensreich und Friedens-Evangelium des Herrn Jesu auszugehen; so dasz sich unsere Gemeinden nicht erbauten aus lebendig gewordenen Steinen, aus allerlei Volk zu einem geistlichen Hause und heiligen Priesterthum, sondern ihr Fortbestehen nur auf die leibliche Nachkommenschaft von mennonitischen Eltern beschränkten. Was vom Fleisch geboren wird, das ist Fleisch, und weil die fleischliche Geburt meistens schon berechtigte zur Taufe und Aufnahme in unsere Gemeinden, darum ist in derselben der vorherrschende Geist irdischer Sinn. Weil wir aber nicht sind, was wir sein sollen, haben wir denn auch das Recht, im Widerspruch mit der heil. Schrift, die Unmöglichkeit einer Gemeinde der Heiligen zu behaupten, oder dieses Princip fallen zu lassen? Sollten wir nicht vielmehr die Ermahnung bei Offenb. 2, 5 uns zu Herzen gehen lassen: „Gedenke, wovon Du gefallen bist und thue Busze, und thue die ersten Werke, wo aber nicht, so werde ich Dir kommen bald, und Deinen Leuchter wegstoszen von Deiner Stätte, wenn Du nicht Busze thust!" Ja! wahrlich, hat erst unsere Gemeinschaft aufgehört ein Licht auf dem Leuchter zu sein, und begnügt man sich mit den äuszeren Ceremonien, ohne auf heiligen Wandel den Hauptwerth zu legen, dann ist sie reif zu dem eben angeführten Gerichte, und als ein dumm gewordenes Salz weggeworfen zu werden.

Doch so öd es auch unter uns aussieht, so wird doch der Herr sein Wort zu erfüllen wissen, dasz die Pforten der Hölle seine Gemeine nicht überwältigen sollen; und wenn auch über die Gemeinden der Provinz Preuszen das Gericht der Verwerfung ergehen sollte, so beginnt ja schon an anderen Orten wieder die Morgenröthe aufzugehen; denn wie das Gemeindeblatt aus Baden vor einiger Zeit berichtete, bilden sich neue Gemeinden in Gegenden und unter Völkern, wo man es gar nicht vermuthete, ganz nach altmennonitischen, oder besser gesagt nach biblischen und apostolischen Grundsätzen.

Die . . . angeführten Schriftstellen und Aussprüche Menno's, (denen noch so viele andere in gleichem Sinne beigefügt werden könnten, dasz sie wohl einen ganzen Jahrgang der Mennonitischen Blätter füllen würden) müssen schon allen Zweifel an der Schrift- und Bekenntniszmäszigkeit des wehrlosen Christenthums benehmen, und meiner Meinung nach, anstatt die beunruhigten Gewissen, über das

Abweichen vom Väter-Glauben, laut der Bemühung des Herausgebers einzuschläfern, noch mehr erschrecken, zu denken, wovon sie gefallen sind, und wieder anfangen Busze und die ersten Werke zu thun. Allen diesen vielen und unzweideutigen Bibelstellen gegenüber, deren Sinn dem Wesen des Krieges so entgegensteht, wie Tag und Nacht, soll sich das beunruhigte Gemüth stillen lassen; durch den Ausspruch Pauli's Röm. 13, oder durch die ganz sinnwidrig angeführte Stelle Joh. 15, 13: „Niemand hat gröszere Liebe, denn dasz er sein Leben läszt für seine Freunde"; diese Beweisführung erweckt in mir eigenthümliche Gedanken über die Theologie, oder die Meinung des Herausgebers von dem Verständnisz der Leser seines Blattes. Sind denn die Franzosen und andere vermeintliche Feinde nicht auch unsere Brüder? sind sie nicht auch von Gott erschaffen und durch das theure Blut Christi erkauft? ist das Kriegführen gegen sie, selbst wenn sie verführt wären uns zu hassen, die brüderliche und allgemeine Liebe, wie Christus sie fordert? Darnach hätte der Herr Christus die Seinen doch wohl viel besser geliebt, wenn er sich hätte vom himmlischen Vater die 12 Legionen Engel senden lassen, um damit durch seinen gewaltigen Arm, sein allezeit verfolgtes und unterdrücktes Volk vor den blutigen Martern zu schützen, als nun, da er uns durch sein Stillesein, wie ein Lamm, das zur Schlachtbank geführt wird, Gottes wunderbaren Rathschlusz erfüllt, und das Vorbild der Geduld und Ergebung in seinen Willen, und die herrlichen Folgen davon kund gethan hat. Wäre es der Wille des Herrn gewesen, dasz Christen dazu berufen, auf weltlichen Thronen zu herrschen, und weltliche Reiche zu gründen und zu schützen, so hätte er gewisz für Regenten und Krieger besondere Ausnahmegesetze und Regeln gegeben, weil er ja wuszte, dasz ein Staat und ein ganzes Volk, das nach seiner Voraussicht bis zur Erndte aus Guten und Bösen bestehen wird, nicht durch's Evangelium, dessen zwingende Macht die Liebe ist, noch durch's göttliche Gesetz, zu dessen Erfüllung die Furcht treibt, sondern nur durch das Gesetz, dessen Gehorsam das Schwert der Obrigkeit erzwingt, regiert werden kann. Den Jüngern Christi steht aber im ganzen neuen Testament keine weitergehende Gewalt zu, als sie uns in Matth. 18, V. 15—22 gestattet ist; weil sich aber hienach kein unbekehrter Mensch, geschweige denn ein ganzer Stamm regieren läszt. so haben wir allen Grund anzunehmen, dasz es garnicht im Sinne des Heilandes lag, dasz ein christlicher Staat bestehen sollte, in dem einer seiner Jünger herrschen, und die Anderen auf andere Weise als durch Gebete den Thron stützen sollten. Wer Matth. 20, 25—28 und Luc. 22, 25. 26 sich gesagt sein läszt, wie sollte der auch herrschen wollen. Woher . . . die Behauptung, dasz alle die von unsern Glaubensvätern angeführten biblischen Gründe für das duldende Christenthum nur die inhaltreiche Wahrheit aussprechen, dasz der Christ als Glied des Reiches Christi, das nicht von dieser Welt ist, für sich selbst in seinem Herzen alles selbstische Wesen, allen Zorn, Rache und Neid bekämpfen und die Liebe, die das Böse mit Gutem überwindet, üben soll, dasz derselbe aber als Mitglied des irdischen Staates, wenn ihm von der Obrigkeit das Schwert in die Hand gegeben wird, unter Umständen entbunden sei, solche Gebote der Sanftmuth und Liebe zu üben; wo stehen diese

Ausnahmeregeln, die den Christen, wenn er Soldat ist, entbinden, die Gebote Christi und auch mehrere der heiligen 10 Gebote Gottes, die auch beim Kriegsdienst nicht zu halten sind, zu erfüllen? Im Herzen soll er als Genosse des Reiches Christi Liebe haben, und als Bürger des irdischen Staates soll er mit dem Schwerte tödten! Ich weisz nicht, wie diese beiden Gegensätze in einem Menschen zu vereinen sind, mir würde das unmöglich sein!

Die Auslegung des Herausgebers über den Ausspruch Christi: „Stecke dein Schwert in die Scheide" u. s. w. scheint mir sehr befangen zu 'sein. Der Zweck dasz der Herr seinen Jüngern befahl 2 Schwerter zu kaufen, war doch, dasz die Schrift erfüllt werde: „Er ist unter die Uebelthäter gerechnet worden"; und um ihnen ein unvergeszliches Gedächtnisz zu geben, wie seine Jüngerschaft sich der allergröszten Ungerechtigkeit gegenüber zu verhalten hat. Wer also noch das Schwert zur Verfechtung seiner Interessen, wie Petrus, gebraucht wissen oder selbst gebrauchen will, der steht auch noch unter dem Schwertes Rechte, das am leiblichen Leben straft, und durch die dadurch gewirkte Todesfurcht auch unter den irdisch gesinnten Menschen mit Erfolg die Herrschaft führt; der ist also auch noch nicht frei von der Furcht vor denen, die den Leib tödten, aber die Seele nicht mögen tödten; denn während solcher aus Mangel an Vertrauen auf Gottes Allmacht und Weisheit, sich selbst mit dem Schwerte zu schützen sucht, und in solchem ungläubigen Zustande sein Leben verlöre, der wäre umgekommen; dagegen ein solcher, der im Glauben an die Verheiszungen Christi auf Gott vertraut, wenn er auch durch ruchlose Hand sein Leben verliert, nicht umgekommen ist, weil er bereits vom Tode zum Leben durchgedrungen ist, denn Christus spricht: „wer da lebet und glaubet an mich, der wird nimmermehr sterben."

. . . In demselben Maasze, in dem man bei Unterwerfung unter das Evangelium die Anwendung des Schwertes überflüssig macht, wird auch der Krieg an Ausdehnung und Furchtbarkeit abnehmen, bis er, wenn alles vom Gesetze Christi erfüllt, ganz überflüssig sein wird. Dasz eine Obrigkeit sein musz, die das Schwert führt, so lange die Sünde ist, ist ganz bestimmt Gottes Wille, und dasz er ihrer sich auch bedient, seine Gerichte und Rathschlüsse in der Welt auszuführen, daran zweifeln wir auch nicht, denn wenn ihm Sturm, Hagel, Feuer und Wassersnoth, ja selbst der Teufel dienen musz zur Erreichung seiner Rathschlüsse, warum denn nicht auch die Obrigkeit. Ja wenn sie ihrer Pflicht eingedenk die Frommen schützt, so nehmen wir das als jede andere Gnadengabe aus der Hand unseres Gottes mit Dank an, dasz wir sie aber bilden müssen und durchs Schwert unterstützen helfen, davon finde ich im ganzen neuen Testament weiter keine Anweisung, als allezeit zu Gott für sie zu bitten, und dasz wir Schosz, dem Schosz gebühret, und Ehre, dem Ehre gebühret, zu geben haben. Es wird auch niemals an solchen fehlen, die da herrschen wollen, denn nach dem von Adam geerbten Hochmuth liegt ja in jedem natürlichen Menschen die Sucht zu herrschen. Wenn ich also das klare Wort des Herrn nicht meistern will, so finde ich den von uns geforderten Wehrdienst, im Widerspruche mit dem Vorbild und Worte des Herrn, und da haben wir mit vollem Rechte Ursache zu

sagen: „Man musz Gott mehr gehorchen denn den Menschen," denn die Obrigkeit ist nicht der guten Werke wegen zu fürchten. Wenn unter den verschiedenen Kategorien der Obrigkeit in 1. Pet. 2, V. 13 u. 14, auch Oberste und Hauptleute aufgeführt sind, so lese man zu dieser Stelle einen guten Commentar, der die Bibel nach dem Grundtext erklärt, so wird man finden, dasz diese Stelle richtig übersetzt, so heiszt: "dem Könige als dem Oberherrn, den Landpflegern die von ihm gesandt werden, ꝛc."

Wer aber die Wehrlosigkeit, obgleich sie ihm nicht nach seiner aus dem Worte Gottes geschöpften Erkenntnisz, Herzenssache ist, nur der Bequemlichkeit wegen, erhalten wissen will, wie dies der Verfasser von uns glaubt, den trifft der Lohn der Heuchelei ganz recht, denn dem ist es auch Pflicht, den Schutz, den er fordert, verstärken zu helfen. Der sogenannte Samariterdienst, der uns in jener Abhandlung so sehr zur Pflicht gemacht wird, ist ebenfalls, deshalb, weil damit auch die eidliche Verpflichtung auf die Kriegsartikel und das Tragen von Waffen verbunden ist, ein Kriegsdienst und durch die Uebernahme desselben wird der Krieg als ein nothwendiges Uebel anerkannt, und müszte deshalb unser Zeugnisz von der Unchristlichkeit des Krieges verstummen.

Auf die Ausführungen des Herausgebers in Bezug auf die Politik und die Consequenzen des letzten französischen Krieges näher einzugehen, würde in zu grosze Weitläufigkeiten führen, und aus dem Gesagten wird wohl Jeder ermessen können, wie ich und meine Gesinnungsgenossen darüber denken.

Wenn diejenigen Leser dieser Blätter, welche sich dem Wehrgesetze untergeben haben, dadurch in ihren Gewissen sollten beruhigt werden, weil auch nur ein sehr geringer Theil der Brüder in Ruszland sich der Wehrpflicht durch Auswanderung zu entziehen sucht, so ist das Halten mit dem groszen Haufen, in Sachen, die das Reich Gottes betreffen, doch nicht empfehlenswerth, denn nach dem Worte Christi sind es nur die "Wenigsten", die auf dem Wege des Lebens wandeln. Aber dennoch ist die Zahl derer, von denen wir wissen, dasz sie fest halten mit und an dem Worte der Geduld, nicht so klein, denn bereits sind 500 Familien von den Brüdern der südlichen Colonien fest entschlossen nach Amerika auszuwandern und haben bereits 3 Deputirte dorthin gesandt; weitere 3 Deputirte von dort und einer aus unsern Gemeinden reisen in diesen Tagen nach, um mit den betreffenden Regierungen wegen der Bedingungen zur Ansiedelung zu unterhandeln. Auszerdem ist das Bekenntnisz vom wehrlosen Christenthum in der Welt nicht im Aussterben, sondern im Wachsen begriffen. Nicht allein unsere zahlreichen Gemeinden in Amerika halten dasselbe als einen Fundamental-Artikel aufrecht, sondern auch andere Religionsgesellschaften, die hierin mit uns eins sind, zählen nach vielen Hunderttausend Mitgliedern in der Welt.

Wenn ich dem Herausgeber auch sonst viel guten Erfolg seines Blattes wünsche, so wünsche ich aber von dem besprochenen Aufsatze, dasz er seinen Zweck, die zweifelhaften Gemüther in falsche Sicherheit zu bringen, verfehlen möchte, und wünsche auch, dasz noch recht viele Seelen, die sich noch nicht klar sind, ob rechts oder links, immer mehr möchten in Gewissensnoth kommen, und daher den Herrn so

lange um Licht anrufen, bis er ihnen ein aufrichtiges Herz und ein rechtes Verständnisz schenkt, seinen Willen zu thun. Wie jammervoll wird es doch für alle armen Verführten sein, die sich so leicht zur Theilnahme an diesen, von der Welt gepriesenen Heldenthaten verleiten lieszen, wenn sie hören werden in der Ewigkeit, wie die Hölle wiederhallen wird von dem Geheul derer, denen vielleicht durch ihre Kugeln, Schwerter oder Spiesze die Gnadenzeit abgerissen ist, während sie sonst noch hätten Busze thun und selig werden können. O, wenn der Herr eine Seele mehr achtet, als die ganze Welt, ein jämmerlicher Preis ist es dann, um Auszeichnungen, Korporationsrechte, gesetzliche Gleichstellung mit anderen Confessionsgenossen, Sicherung des Eigenthums, und Ruhm des Vaterlandes und der Nation, Mitgenosse eines Werkes zu werden, durch das hunderttausende Seelen, in einem Moment, wo sie von Hasz und Erbitterung durchglüht sind, in die Ewigkeit versetzt werden. Und dazu sollten wir helfen und nicht lieber den Wanderstab nehmen, um dorthin zu gehen, wo wir frei sind von solchem jammervollen Thun, und wo man uns gern aufnehmen will?

O, wenn der Herr kommen wird, dem wir als eine reine Braut zugeführt werden sollen am Tage der Hochzeit, denn wenn die Hochzeit des Lammes wird gekommen sein, dann musz sich sein Weib bereitet haben, nämlich wenn der neue Himmel und die neue Erde, in welcher Gerechtigkeit wohnt, geoffenbaret wird, wo aller Krieg aufgehört haben soll und die Schwerter in Pflugschaaren verwandelt werden, und er träfe uns gerade dabei, dasz wir kriegten, kriegen lernten oder auch nur den Krieg rechtfertigten, oder was noch schrecklicher wäre, wenn zu der Zeit, da die 10 Könige ihre Macht dem Thier geben, und wider das Lamm streiten werden, Offbg. Joh. 17, V. 14, wir als gehorsame Unterthanen des Königs dann auch dabei wären, mit dem Maalzeichen des Thieres dekorirt! O, wie würden wir es dann bedauern, dasz wir nicht die Ermahnung in Offenbg. 3, V. 11: "Siehe ich komme bald, behalte, was du hast, dasz Niemand deine Krone nehme", besser beachtet hätten. —

Möchte doch der geehrte Herausgeber meine freie Sprache nicht so auffassen, als hätte ich im feindseligen Sinne gegen ihn mich so derb ausgedrückt; ich habe lediglich die Sache im Auge gehabt und nicht die Person, denn sonst hätte ich wohl rücksichtsvoller sein sollen, weil der Herausgeber sich stets sehr wohlwollend gegen mich gezeigt hat. Ich werde es gern entgegennehmen, wenn er aus Gottes Wort mich zu widerlegen suchen wird; vielleicht könnte durch solchen Austausch der Ueberzeugungen noch manche Seele für die Wehrfreiheit gewonnen werden.

Den Grusz des auferstandenen Heilandes: "Friede sei mit allen, den in Christo Jesu sind" wünscht von Herzen. W. Ewert.

ERRATA IN THE ARTICLE, MENNONITES IN DUTCH LITERATURE

"Mennonites in Dutch Literature"—Dr. H. F. W. Jeltes

The valuable article by Dr. H. F. W. Jeltes of Amsterdam, Holland on "Mennonites in Dutch Literature," which appeared in the *Mennonite Quarterly Review* for April, 1937, Vol. XI, Number 2, pp. 142-155, was unfortunately printed with a number of errors. These errors, in part typographical and in part errors in translation, for which Dr. Jeltes is in no way responsible, are herewith corrected. [Ed.]

Page 143, line 9. For *Joris* read *Jorisz.*
Page 144, line 6. For *Golden* read *Gulden.*
Page 144, line 11. After *Christi* insert (*1613*).
Page 144, line 13. For *laesten* read *laetsten.*
Page 144, line 37. For *gate* read *tower.*
Page 145, line 2. For *established* read *unshakeable.*
Page 145, line 14. For *didactic prose work* read *an ecclesiastical-didactic, rather prosaic poem.*
Page 146, line 12. For *teacher, an independent* read *teacher and independent.*
Page 146, lines 37ff. Read: His etchings, which accompany his poems, probably still more those, which appeared in Van Braght's *Martelaers-Spiegel* of 1604 and his great series of etchings, called *Icones Biblicae of Afbeeldingen der merkwaardigste geschiedenissen van het Oude en Nieuwe Testament* (*1708, 1729*), contributed much to his unusual popularity among Dutch Protestants of the most varying views, which lasted more than two centuries.
Page 147, line 24. For *in addition* read *moreover.*
Page 147, line 29. For *Feitema* read *Feitama.*
Page 147, line 39. For *method of teaching the same* read *method of phonics and prosody.*
Page 148, line 14. For *Lenora* read *Leonora.*
Page 148, line 35-39. Read: preferred, although she was of the Reformed faith and widow of a pastor of this church, to attend the churches of the Mennonites with her Mennonite friend and co-worker Agatha (Aagje) *Deken* (1741-1804), who had been reared in the orphanage of the Collegiants in Amsterdam.
Page 150, line 14. For *Bosboon* read *Bosboom.*
Page 151, line 20. For *exactitude* read *soberness.*
Page 151, line 23. The Dutch words "zoo quaad te grijpen als een aal" are to be put after the word *attack* of the next line.
Page 151, line 39. For *Mennisten* read *Menniste.*
Page 152, last line. For *villas* read *houses.*

EDITORIAL

(Continued from page 234)

here, that these documents constitute a part of the volume on the immigration of the Mennonites from Russia to North America by Dr. George Leibbrandt which is to be published soon in the series, *Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History.*

In connection with Dr. Correll's documents it seemed good to publish separately a significant 1873 epistle by Elder Wilhelm Ewert of Prussia, a Mennonite immigrant to America who joined the Russian immigrant stream, and which was originally planned to be a part of the Correll collection. Since it is a reprint from a German Mennonite periodical, it could hardly be classed as an original document. Nevertheless it portrays so well and with so much power the motivation of that great migration of nonresistant Mennonites in 1873-75 from Russia and Prussia to the western prairies of the United States and Canada, that it well deserves publication. It is a moving document, written with deep conviction, and represents the older position of the Mennonites of Germany which has been altogether lost since that time. The modern extinction of nonresistance among German Mennonites is attested by the constitution of the newly-reorganized "Union of Mennonites in Germany," adopted in 1935, which expressly states that the Mennonites of that country no longer hold to this principle.

Attention should be called to the list of errata to Dr. Jeltes' article "Mennonites in Dutch Literature," which appeared in our April number.

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